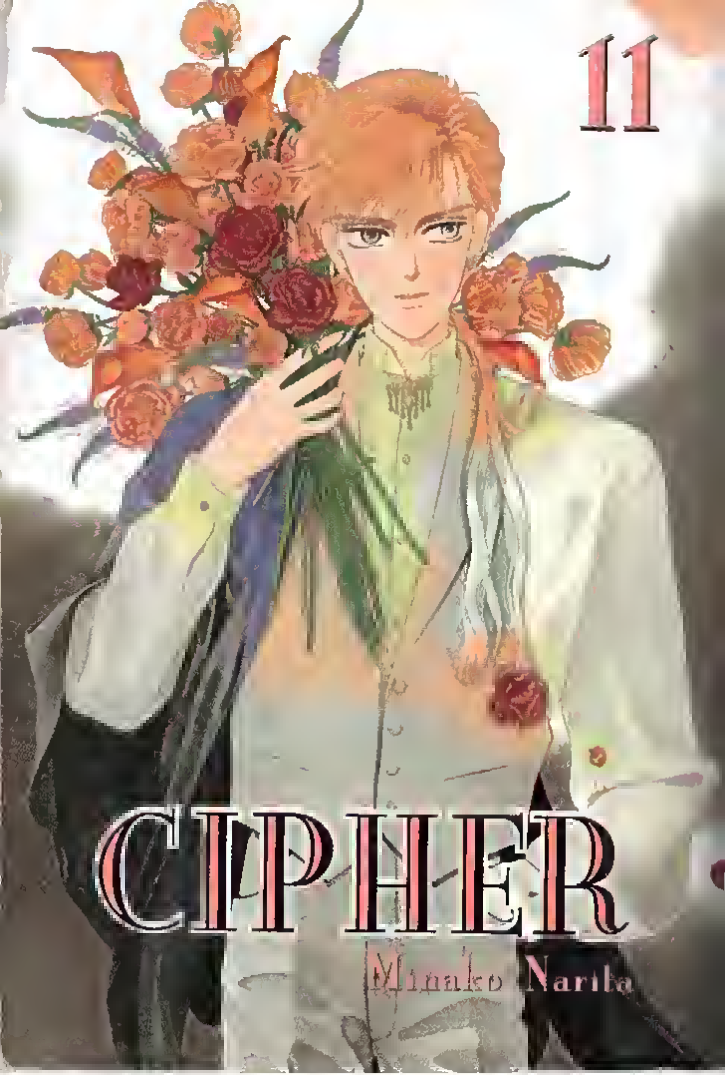

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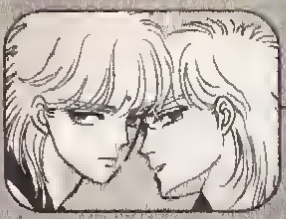
WHO'S WHO IN CIPHER



Siva & Cipher

Siva (Jake) & Cipher (Roy) identical twin brothers made famous by their childhood acting success. They used to share not just a face, but also a single identity. Following the sudden death of their friend Dana Jackson, Cipher decided to move to Los Angeles and try to make it on his own.

Anise

Schoolmate and good friend of Siva (Jake) and Cipher (Roy). She was on the verge of taking her relationship with Cipher to a romantic level but it didn't quite work out. The twins seem to be drifting out of her life, while her feelings towards them grow increasingly confused.

The Story So Far

Cipher now resides in Los Angeles with a new roommate named Hel. Though Hel's personality is completely different from Cipher's, he has nevertheless proven to be a good friend and has helped Cipher to open up a bit. But while Cipher seems to have adjusted to life in L.A., he is haunted by dreams of Siva and Anise back in New York.

Siva's relationship with his new roommate is a bit more complicated. Siva has tried to use Alex more as a surrogate "brother" for Cipher, rather than a roommate with many of the same tensions as before. They also find themselves bound together by a new baby in the Jackson family, a girl who is also named Dana. Siva has dinner with the twins' estranged mother, who is surprised by Siva's paternal tendencies towards baby Dana.

Things have gotten much more complicated for Anise. Although she's always had strong feelings towards Cipher, she made a very awkward request of Siva: she wanted her first sexual experience to be with him, hoping that it would help her get over his brother. But Siva declines and Anise immediately regrets her actions. So in a final attempt to sort things out, she decides it's time to fly to L.A. and bring back Cipher.

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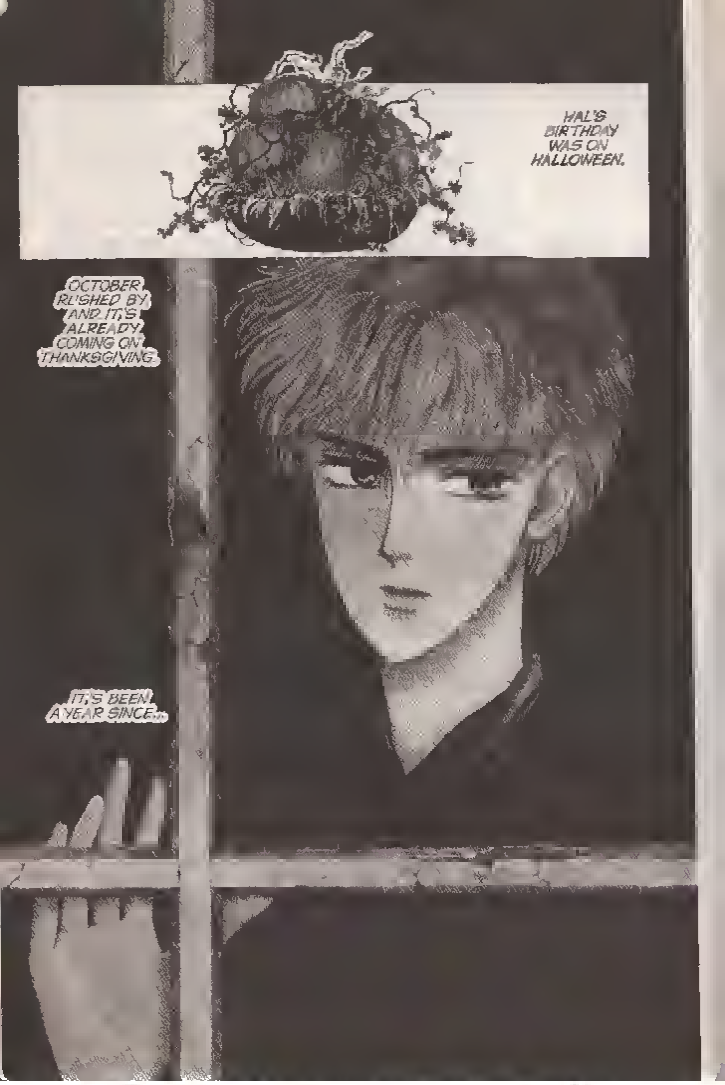

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BWA HA HA
RON REAGAN!
Reagan mask
WHERE?
HERE'RE YOUR PHOTOS, ROY
JUST LIKE AN ACTOR! YOU PHOTOGRAPH WELL.
Hmph!
IT GAVE ME A PLACE TO PUT MY BEER.
YOU WACKO!
DID YOU CARRY THAT PODIUM AROUND THE WHOLE TIME?
HEH HEH HEH
YOU EVEN MADE A SPEECH IN CHARACTER!
"When I act, I do things all the way."
BUT THAT THING REALLY MADE MY NECK HURT.
How cool is that?
Don't steal things on me!
BWA HA HA
HA HA HA
AN ACTOR DISGUISING HIMSELF AS AN ACTOR... GREAT IDEA!
Heh Heh Heh Heh
STILL, EVEN HIS FANS WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE HIM IN THAT MASK.

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WE'LL MAKE COPIES OF ANY PHOTO YOU WANT.
Gimme a pen.
Yeah.
THANKS. FOR HELPING ME NOT GET RECOGNIZED
DUMMY. WE ALL ENJOYED DOING IT. DON'T WORRY.
I GUESS I'LL TAKE A COPY OF THIS ONE, TOO
WHICH ONE?
OKAY
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE SOME-THING TO EAT?
PUT AWAY THE PHOTOS.
THAT'S A GIRL FROM SARAH'S DORM.
WHY? IS SHE YOUR TYPE?

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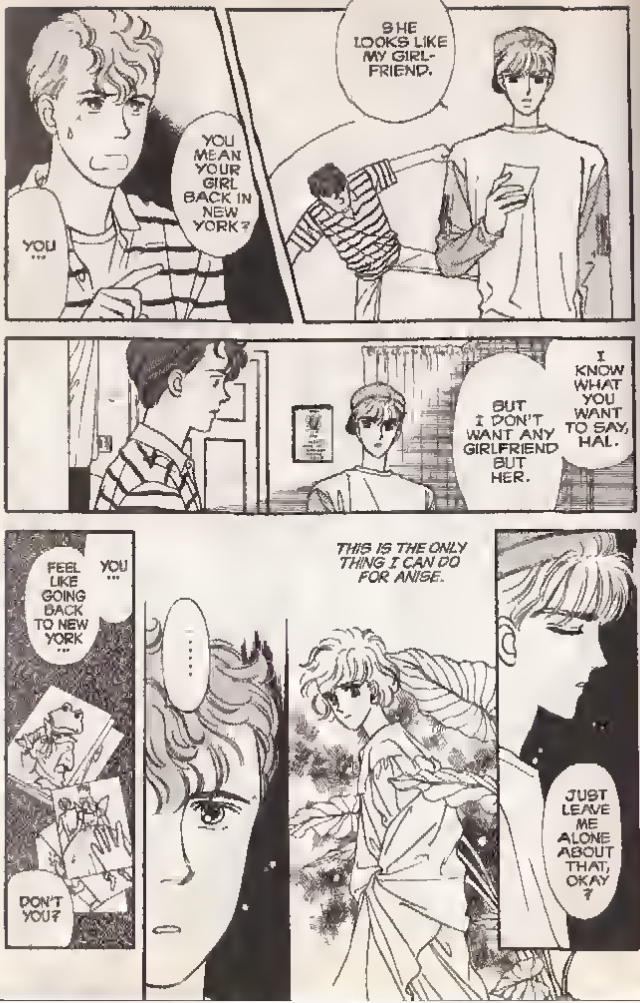
SHE LOOKS LIKE MY GIRL-FRIEND.
YOU MEAN YOUR GIRL BACK IN NEW YORK?
YOU ...
I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY, HAL.
BUT I DON'T WANT ANY GIRLFRIEND BUT HER.
THIS IS THE ONLY THING I CAN DO FOR ANISE.
YOU ...
FEEL LIKE GOING BACK TO NEW YORK ...
DON'T YOU?
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE ABOUT THAT, OKAY?

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NOT GOING BACK TO NEW YORK I'M STAYING HERE
UH..
WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR THANKS-GIVING?
SO..
WHA...
WHY GAMERA?! WHY DON'T YOU ASK ME?!
WANT TO HAVE THANKS-GIVING WITH ME, GAMERA?
WHEW
I SEE.
WHAM
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT! OF COURSE I'M INVITING YOU!
NO WAY I'M LEAVING YOU HERE ALONE!
OF COURSE! AND YOU, TOO!
OH, ARE YOU TAKING GAMERA WITH YOU?
YOU'RE GOING HOME, AREN'T YOU?

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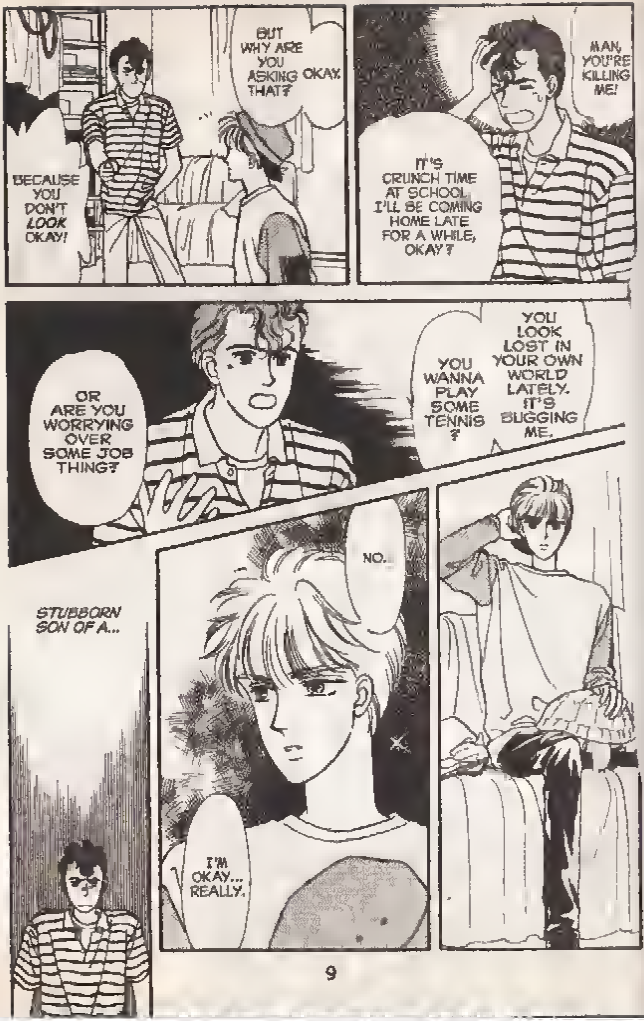
BUT WHY ARE YOU ASKING OKAY THAT?
BECAUSE YOU DON'T LOOK OKAY!
MAN, YOU'RE KILLING ME!
IT'S CRUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL. I'LL BE COMING HOME LATE FOR A WHILE, OKAY?
YOU LOOK LOST IN YOUR OWN WORLD LATELY. IT'S BUGGING ME.
YOU WANNA PLAY SOME TENNIS?
OR ARE YOU WORRYING OVER SOME JOB THING?
NO...
I'M OKAY... REALLY.
STUBBORN SON OF A...

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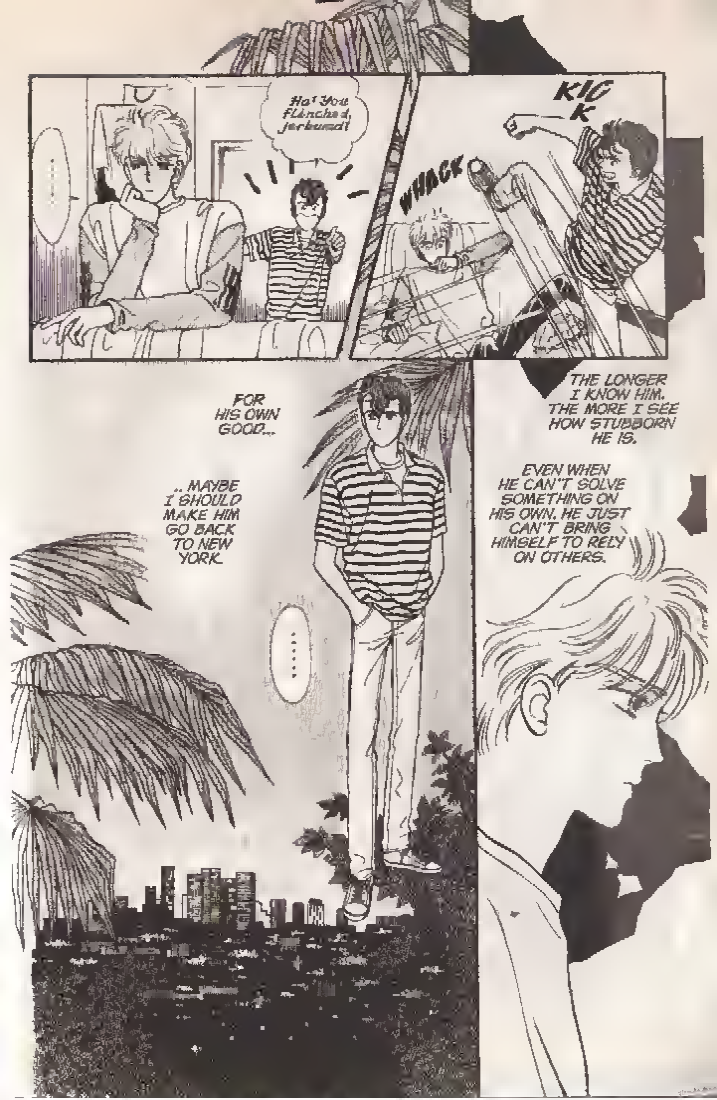
Ha! You flinched, jerkwad!
KIC K
WHACK
THE LONGER I KNOW HIM, THE MORE I SEE HOW STUBBORN HE IS.
FOR HIS OWN GOOD...
EVEN WHEN HE CAN'T SOLVE SOMETHING ON HIS OWN, HE JUST CAN'T BRING HIMSELF TO RELY ON OTHERS.
.. MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE HIM GO BACK TO NEW YORK.

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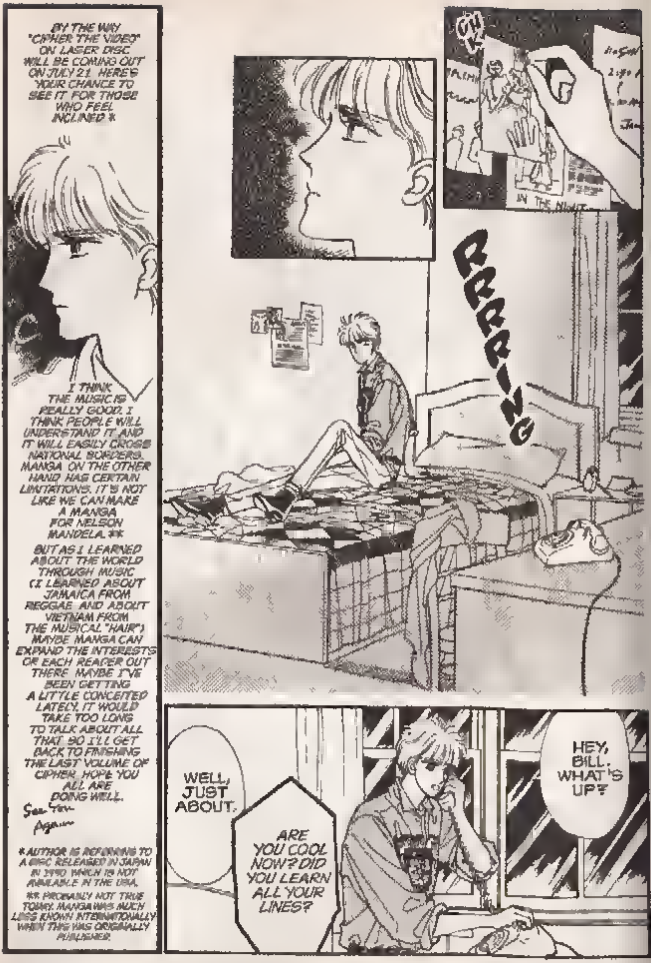
BY THE WAY "CIPHER THE VIDEO" ON LASER DISC WILL BE COMING OUT ON THE 21. HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO SEE IT FOR THOSE WHO FEEL INCLINED.*
I THINK THE MUSIC IS REALLY GOOD. I THINK PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND IT AND IT WILL EASILY CROSS NATIONAL BORDERS. MANGA ON THE OTHER HAND HAS CERTAIN LIMITATIONS. IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN MAKE A MANGA FOR NELSON MANDELA.**
BUT AS I LEARNED ABOUT THE WORLD THROUGH MUSIC (I LEARNED ABOUT JAMAICA FROM REGGAE AND ABOUT VIETNAM FROM THE MUSICAL "HAIR") MAYBE MANGA CAN EXPAND THE INTERESTS OF EACH READER OUT THERE. MAYBE I'VE BEEN GETTING A LITTLE CONCEITED LATELY, IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO TALK ABOUT ALL THAT. SO I'LL GET BACK TO FINISHING THE LAST VOLUME OF CIPHER. HOPE YOU ALL ARE DOING WELL.
See You Again
*AUTHOR IS REFERRING TO A DISC RELEASED IN JAPAN IN 1990 WHICH IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE USA.
**PROBABLY NOT TRUE TODAY. MANGA WAS MUCH LESS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY WHEN THIS WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED.
OH K
IN THE NIGHT
RRRRING
HEY, BILL. WHAT'S UP?
WELL, JUST ABOUT.
ARE YOU COOL NOW? DID YOU LEARN ALL YOUR LINES?

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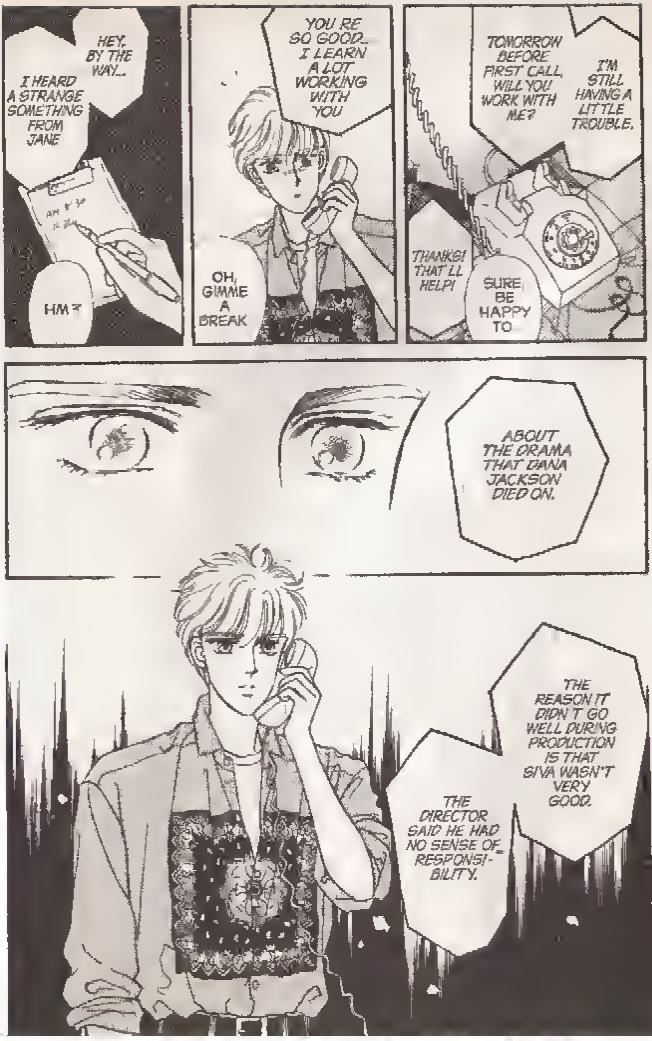
HEY, BY THE WAY...
I HEARD A STRANGE SOMETHING FROM JANE
HM?
YOU'RE SO GOOD... I LEARN A LOT WORKING WITH YOU
OH, GIMME A BREAK
TOMORROW BEFORE FIRST CALL. WILL YOU WORK WITH ME?
I'M STILL HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE.
THANKS! THAT'LL HELP!
SURE, BE HAPPY TO
ABOUT THE DRAMA THAT DANA JACKSON DIED ON.
THE REASON IT DIDN'T GO WELL DURING PRODUCTION IS THAT SIVA WASN'T VERY GOOD.
THE DIRECTOR SAID HE HAD NO SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY.

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I MEAN... SIVA...
I WAS...
BACK THEN...
I KNOW THINGS DIDN'T END UP WELL.
AH... HE DIDN'T SAY THAT SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS
EVEN THOUGH THE ORIGINAL CAUSE WAS AN ACCIDENT, THE DIRECTOR MUST HAVE GOTTEN IT WRONG
THE DIRECTOR WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND HER.
BUT THE REPLACEMENT GIRL WAS A TOTAL AMATEUR...
KLAK
"I THINK YOU'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN."
"IT'S GOOD YOU QUIT."

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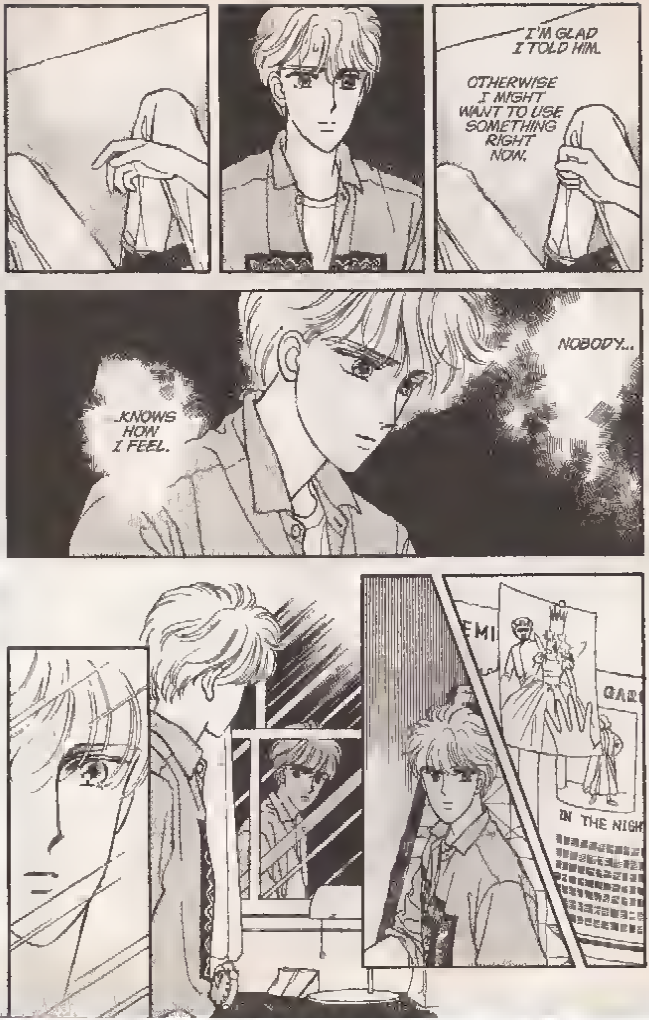

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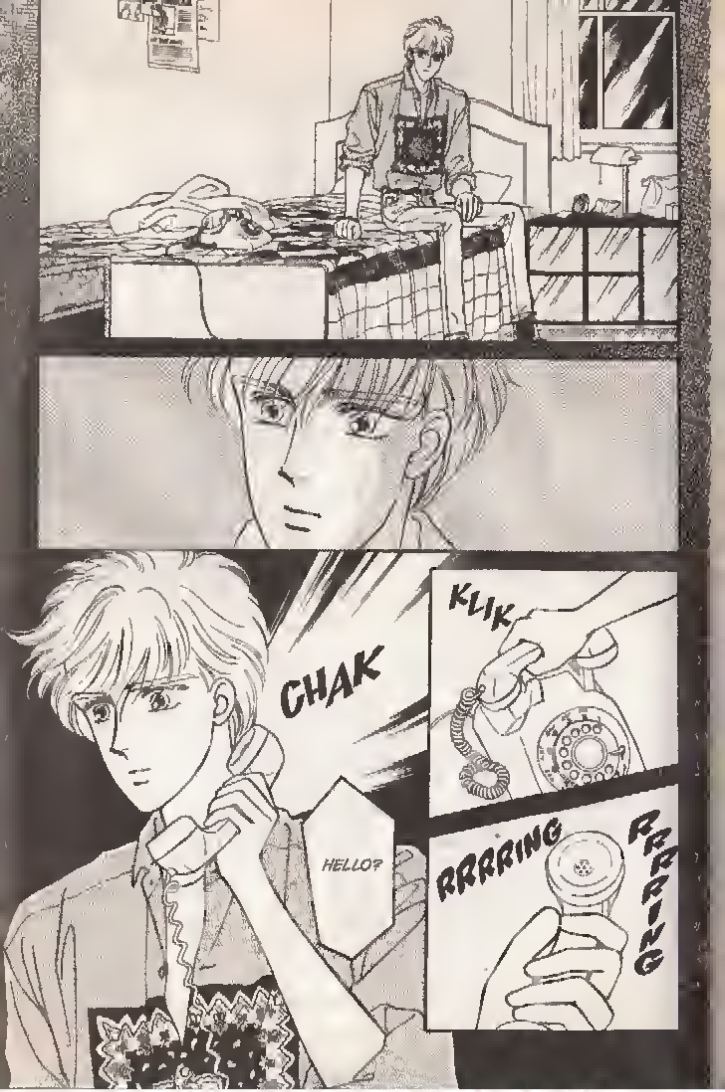

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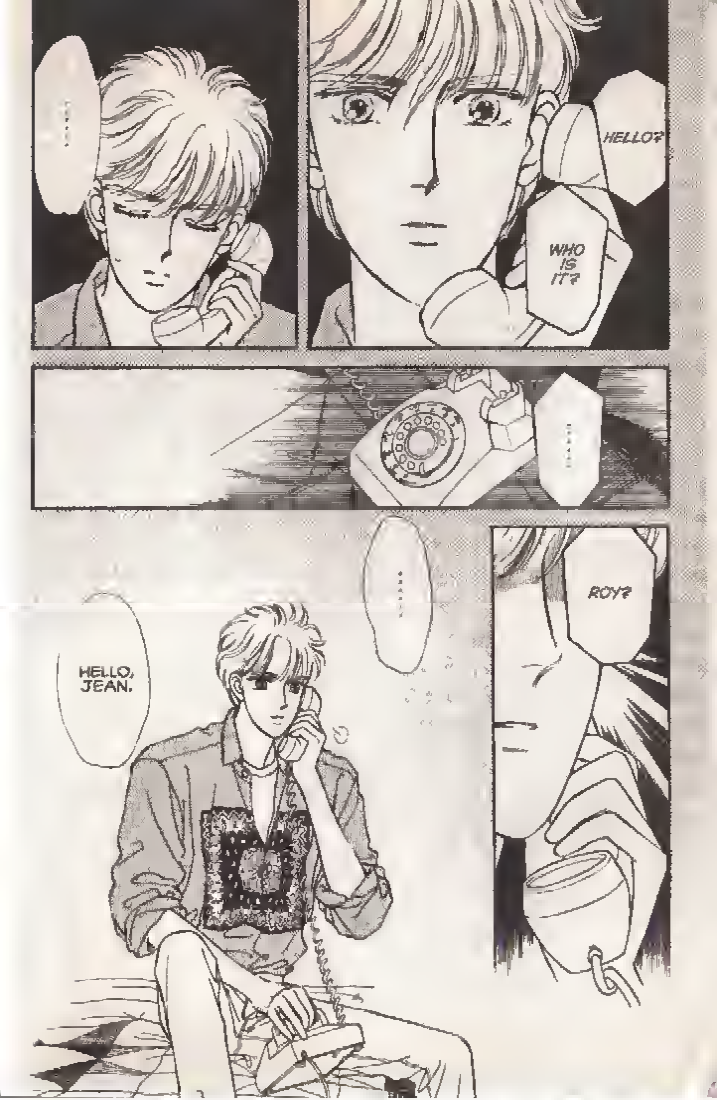

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I KNEW.
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU.
SO...
HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WAS ME?
SO WHAT IS IT? IS SOMETHING WRONG?
.....
IF IT WAS NOTHING, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE CONTACTED ME.
SORRY... IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
JUST STRESSED ABOUT WORK.
I MET UP WITH JAKE JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO.
IT'S ABOUT JAKE, ISN'T IT?
EVERY-ONE SEES RIGHT THROUGH ME.

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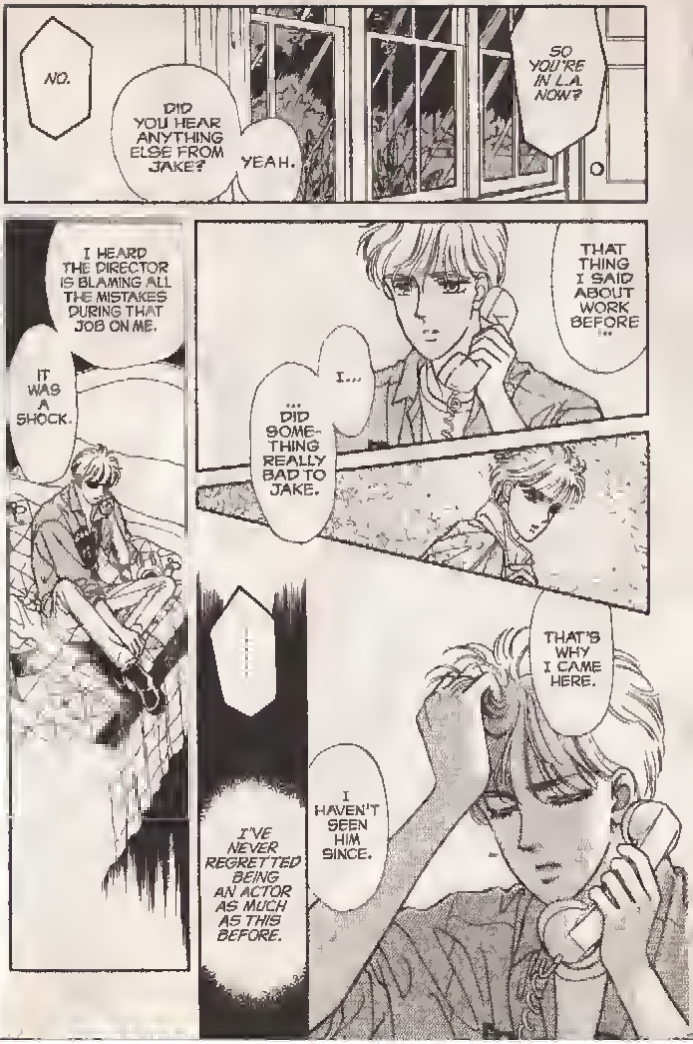
NO.
DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING ELSE FROM JAKE?
YEAH.
SO YOU'RE IN L.A. NOW?
I HEARD THE DIRECTOR IS BLAMING ALL THE MISTAKES DURING THAT JOB ON ME.
IT WAS A SHOCK.
I...
...DID SOMETHING REALLY BAD TO JAKE.
THAT THING I SAID ABOUT WORK BEFORE...
I'VE NEVER REGRETTED BEING AN ACTOR AS MUCH AS THIS BEFORE.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE.
THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE.

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ROY.
WHY DON'T YOU QUIT ACTING?
I CAN'T QUIT.
I'M ABOUT TO START FILMING A MOVIE!
THAT'S NOT IT
I'M SCARED!
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE I KNOW HOW TO DO!
I'VE GOT TO HOLD IT TOGETHER.
BUT... I CAN'T GET THIS JAKE THING OUT OF MY HEAD.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE YOURSELF FORGET IT.
IF I DON'T FORGET IT, I CAN'T DO MY JOB PROPERLY!

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I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THAT!
NO, THAT'S NOT IT!
THAT THING WITH THE DIRECTOR HAS YOU THIS UPSET?
I JUST WANT TO SEE JAKE!
I...
I...
IT HURTS NOT TO SEE JAKE! I WANT TO SEE HIM!

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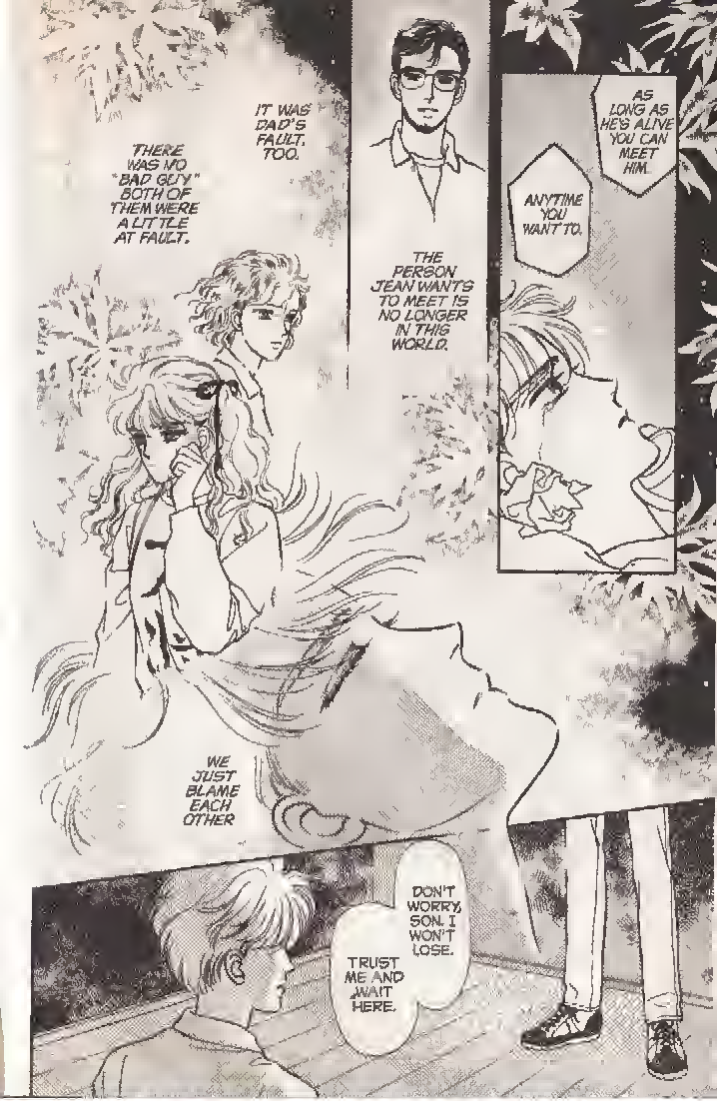
AS LONG AS HE'S ALIVE YOU CAN MEET HIM.
ANYTIME YOU WANT TO.
IT WAS DAD'S FAULT, TOO.
THERE WAS NO "BAD GUY" BOTH OF THEM WERE A LITTLE AT FAULT.
THE PERSON JEAN WANTS TO MEET IS NO LONGER IN THIS WORLD.
WE JUST BLAME EACH OTHER
DON'T WORRY, SON. I WON'T LOSE.
TRUST ME AND WAIT HERE.

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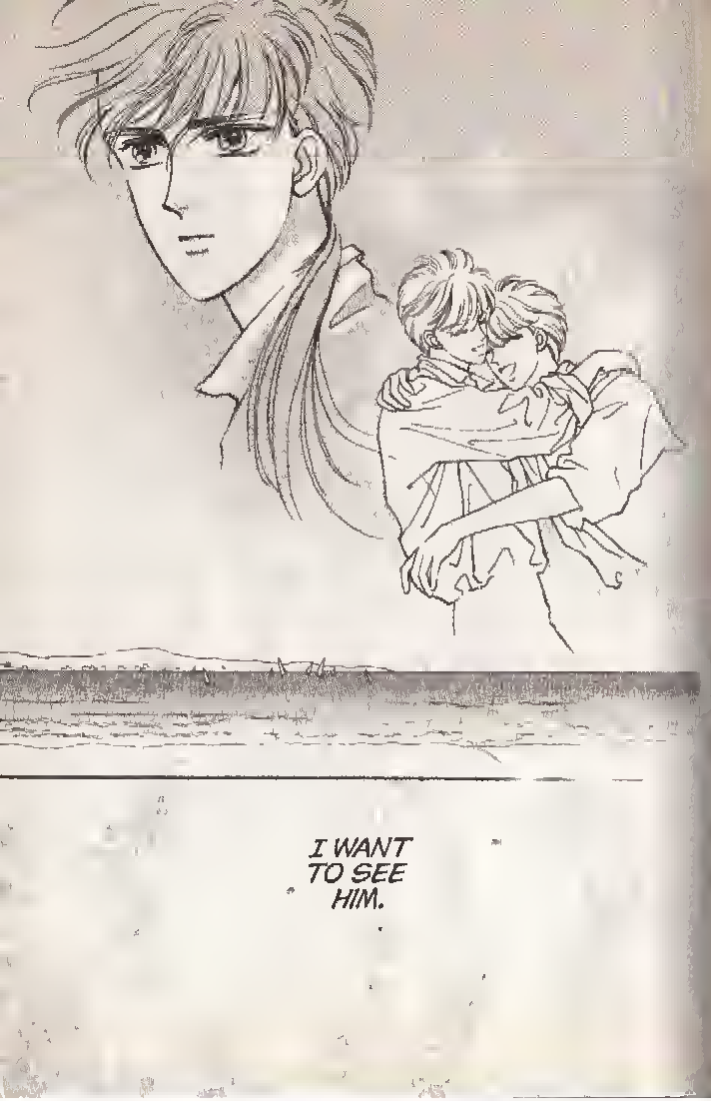
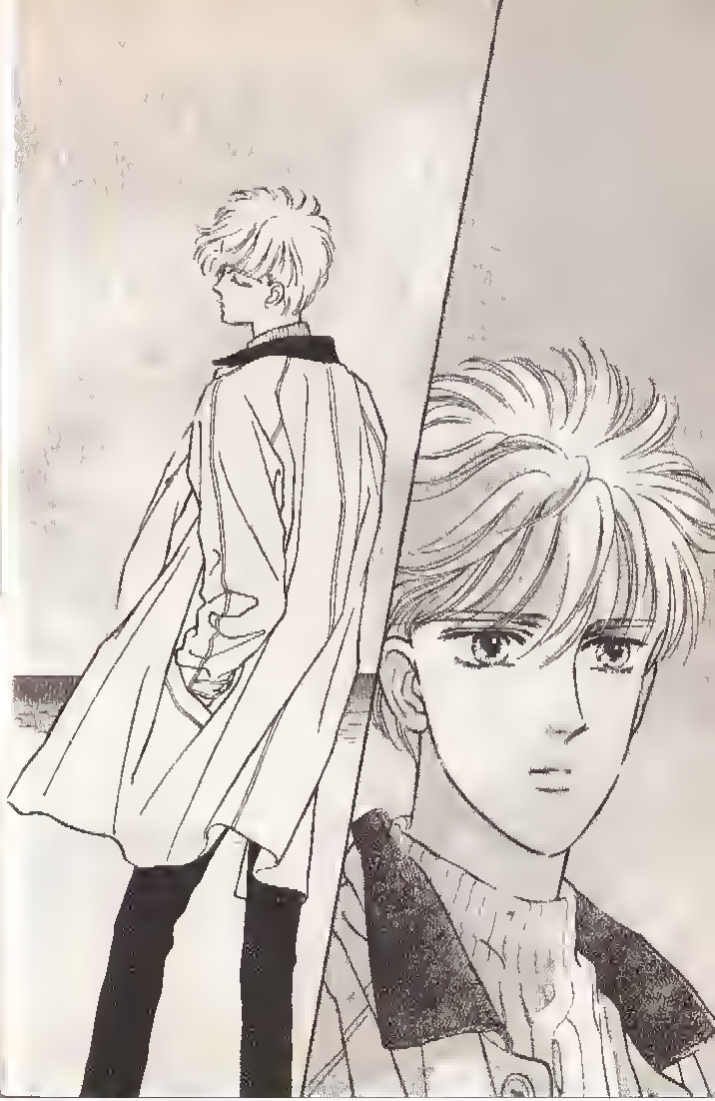


I WANT TO SEE HIM.



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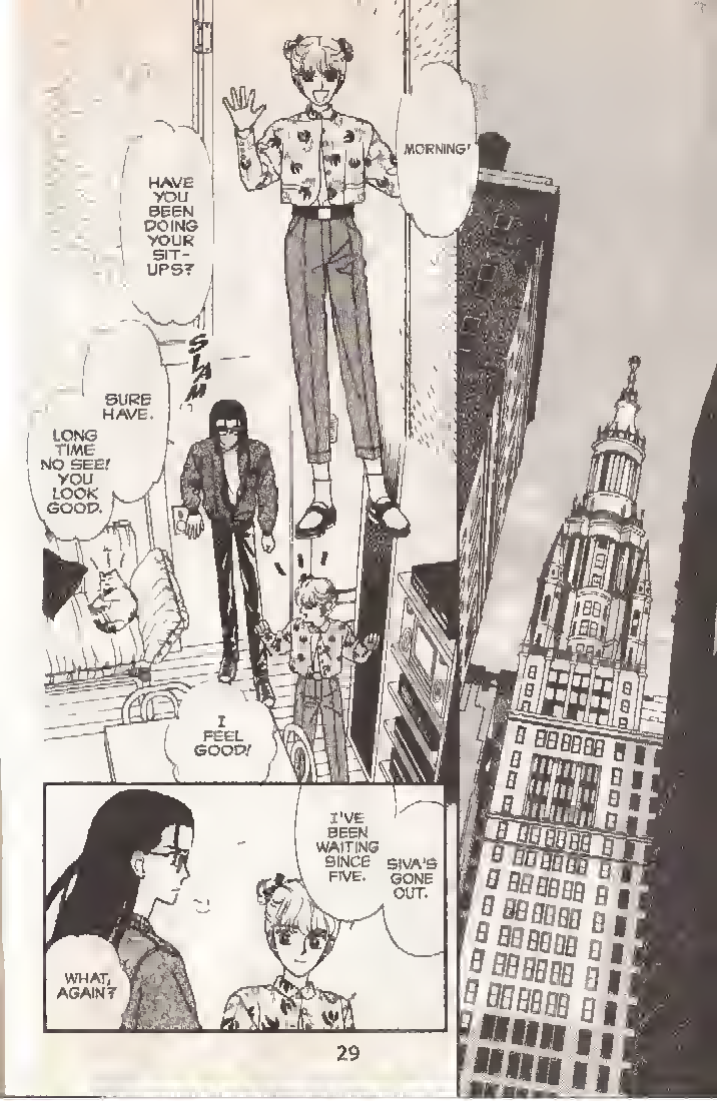

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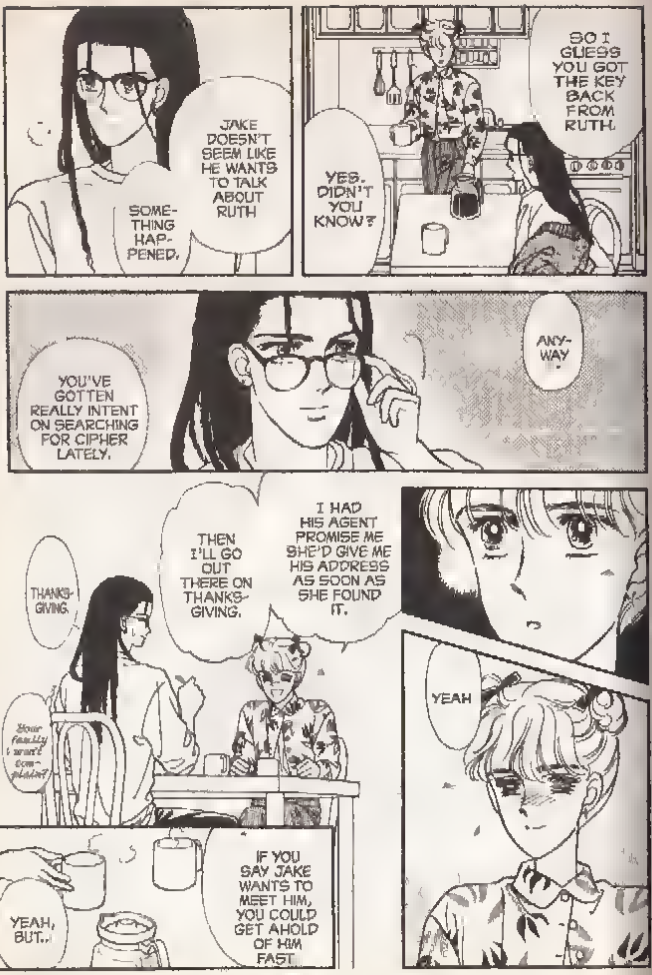
SOMETHING HAPPENED.
JAKE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT RUTH
YES. DIDN'T YOU KNOW?
SO I GUESS YOU GOT THE KEY BACK FROM RUTH.
YOU'VE GOTTEN REALLY INTENT ON SEARCHING FOR CIPHER LATELY.
ANYWAY.
THANKSGIVING.
THEN I'LL GO OUT THERE ON THANKSGIVING.
I HAD HIS AGENT PROMISE ME SHE'D GIVE ME HIS ADDRESS AS SOON AS SHE FOUND IT.
Your faculty I won't complain!
YEAH
YEAH, BUT..
IF YOU SAY JAKE WANTS TO MEET HIM, YOU COULD GET AHOLD OF HIM FAST.

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THIS WILL ONLY GET SETTLED WHEN JAKE WANTS IT TO.
Hurry up and come home, Jerkface! (Ellie)
MAYBE I SHOULD KICK HIM IN THE BUTT MORE.
IF CIPHER FOUND OUT THAT WAS A LIE, HE'D BE DIS-APPOINTED.
YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.
HM?
STARE
SLAM
YOU OKAY?
OH, YOU'RE HERE.
KOFF
KOFF
GULP
YOU'VE SURE CHANGED
"IF THERE ARE TWO PEOPLE, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY FIGHT."
BEFORE, DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANTED SIVA TO SOLVE HIMSELF?

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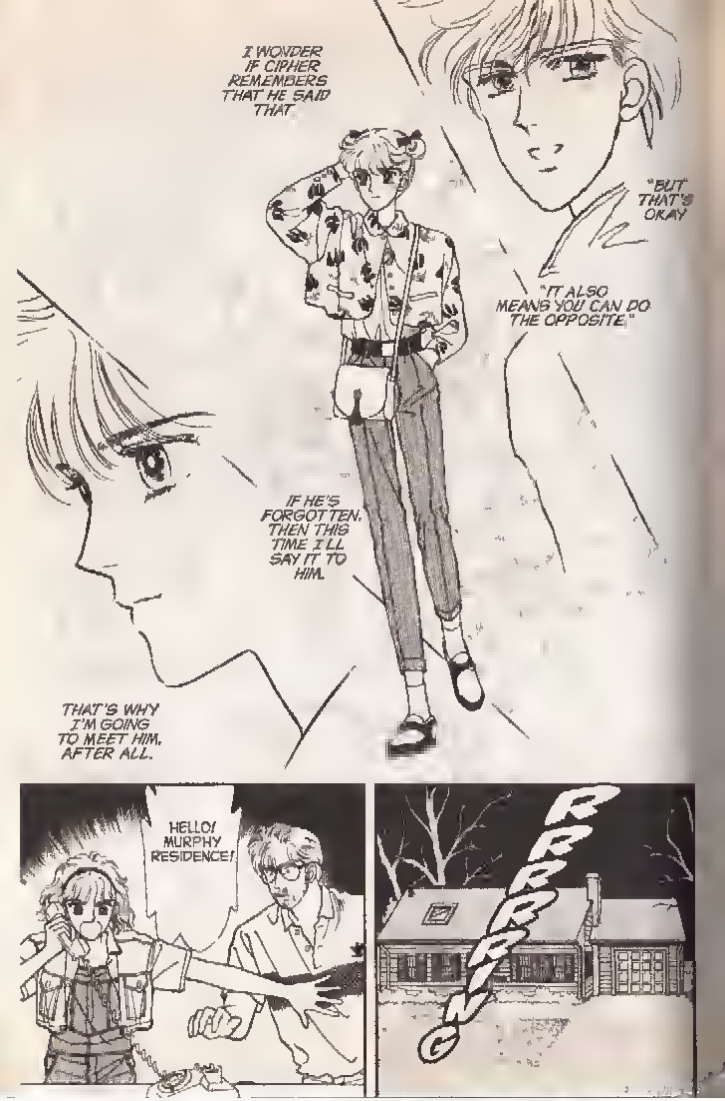
I WONDER IF CIPHER REMEMBERS THAT HE SAID THAT.
"BUT THAT'S OKAY
"IT ALSO MEANS YOU CAN DO THE OPPOSITE."
IF HE'S FORGOTTEN, THEN THIS TIME I'LL SAY IT TO HIM.
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO MEET HIM, AFTER ALL.
HELLO! MURPHY RESIDENCE!
RRRRRING

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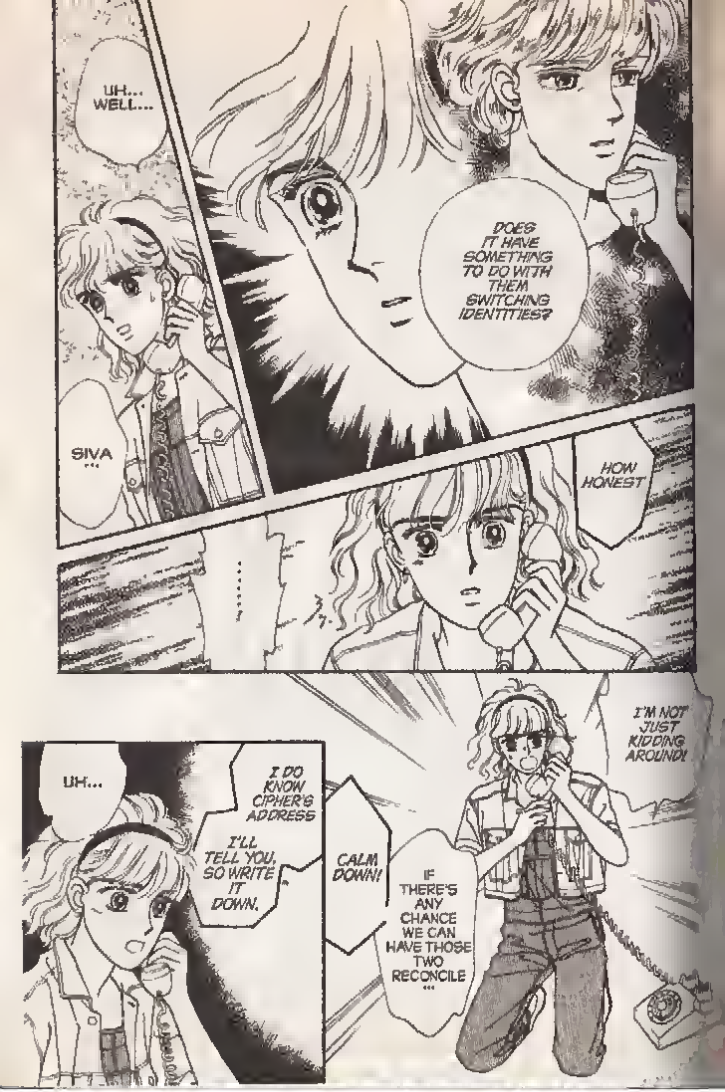
UH... WELL...
DOES IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THEM SWITCHING IDENTITIES?
SIVA ...
HOW HONEST
.....
I'M NOT JUST KIDDING AROUND!
IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE WE CAN HAVE THOSE TWO RECONCILE ...
CALM DOWN!
I DO KNOW CIPHER'S ADDRESS
I'LL TELL YOU, SO WRITE IT DOWN.
UH...

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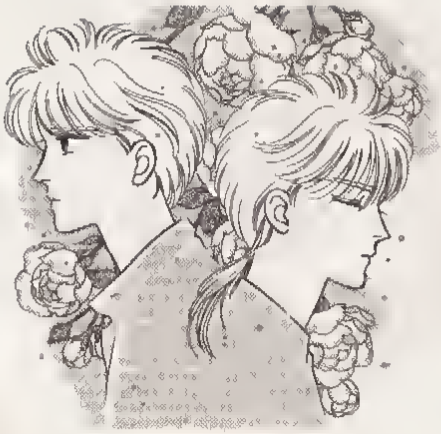

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CIPHER

Scene 12: PREPARATION

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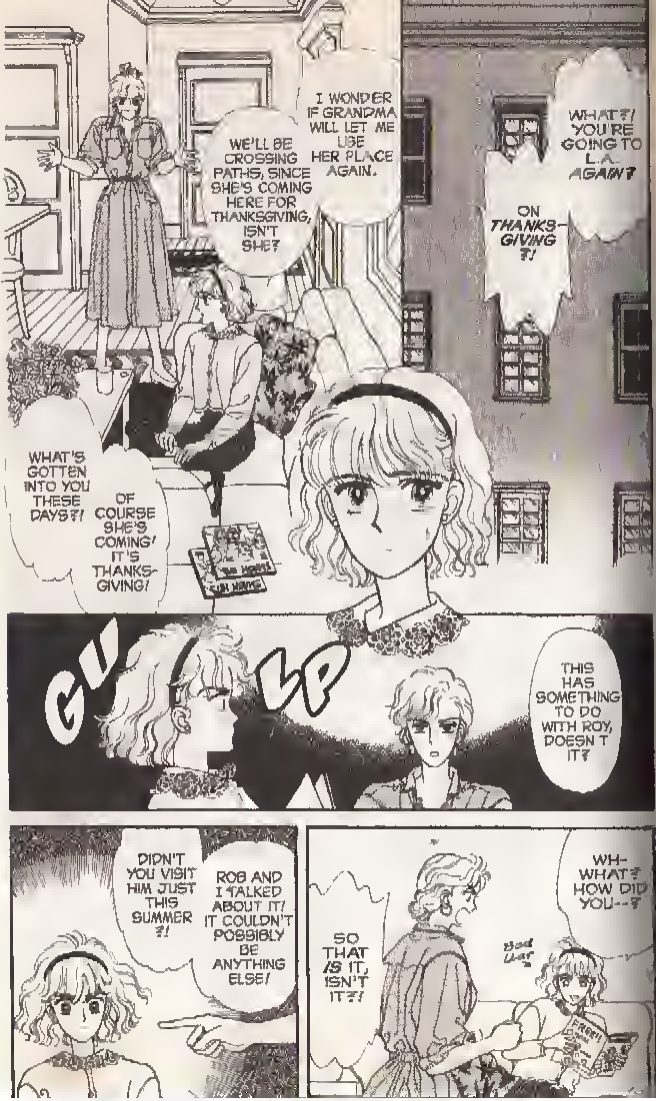
I WONDER IF GRANDMA WILL LET ME USE HER PLACE AGAIN.
WE'LL BE CROSSING PATHS, SINCE SHE'S COMING HERE FOR THANKSGIVING, ISN'T SHE?
WHAT?! YOU'RE GOING TO L.A. AGAIN?
ON THANKS-GIVING?!
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU THESE DAYS?!
OF COURSE SHE'S COMING! IT'S THANKS-GIVING!
GULP
THIS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH ROY, DOESN'T IT?
DIDN'T YOU VISIT HIM JUST THIS SUMMER?!
ROB AND I TALKED ABOUT IT! IT COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE ANYTHING ELSE!
SO THAT IS IT, ISN'T IT?!
WH-WHAT? HOW DID YOU--?
Bad Luck

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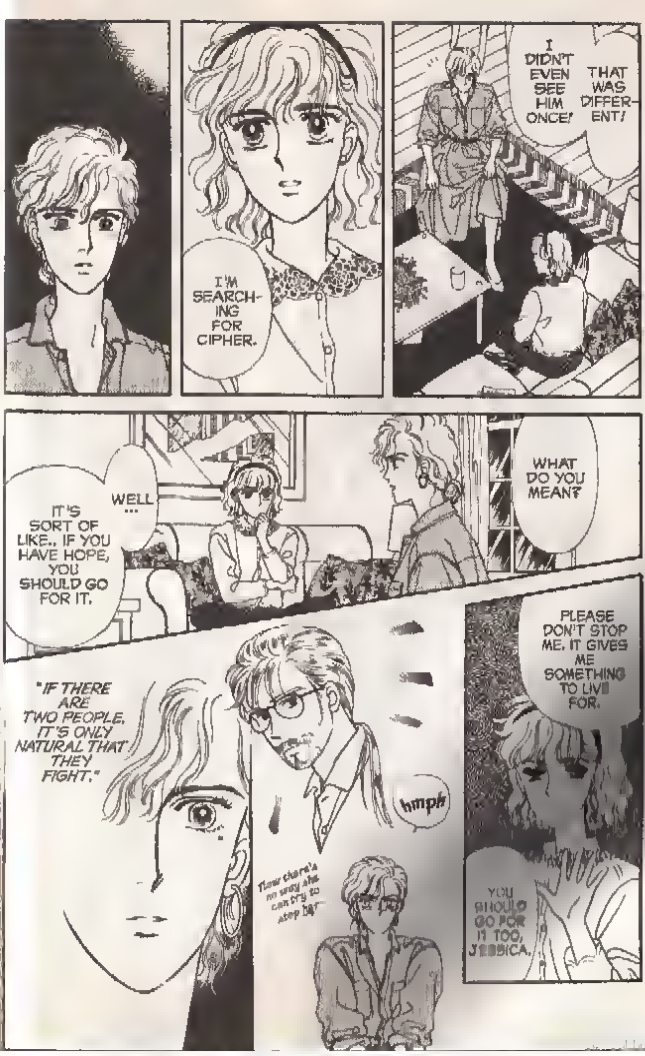
I'M SEARCHING FOR CIPHER.
I DIDN'T EVEN SEE HIM ONCE! THAT WAS DIFFERENT!
WELL ...
IT'S SORT OF LIKE.. IF YOU HAVE HOPE, YOU SHOULD GO FOR IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
"IF THERE ARE TWO PEOPLE, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY FIGHT."
hmph
Now there's no way she can try to stop him.
PLEASE DON'T STOP ME. IT GIVES ME SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR.
YOU SHOULD GO FOR IT TOO, JESSICA.

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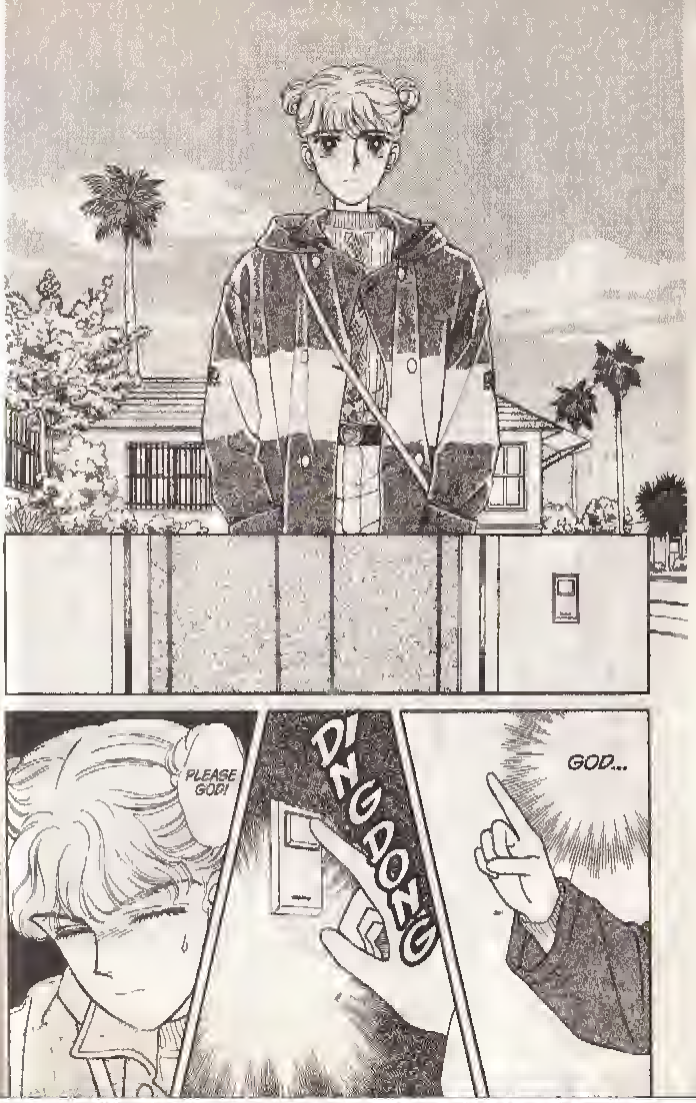

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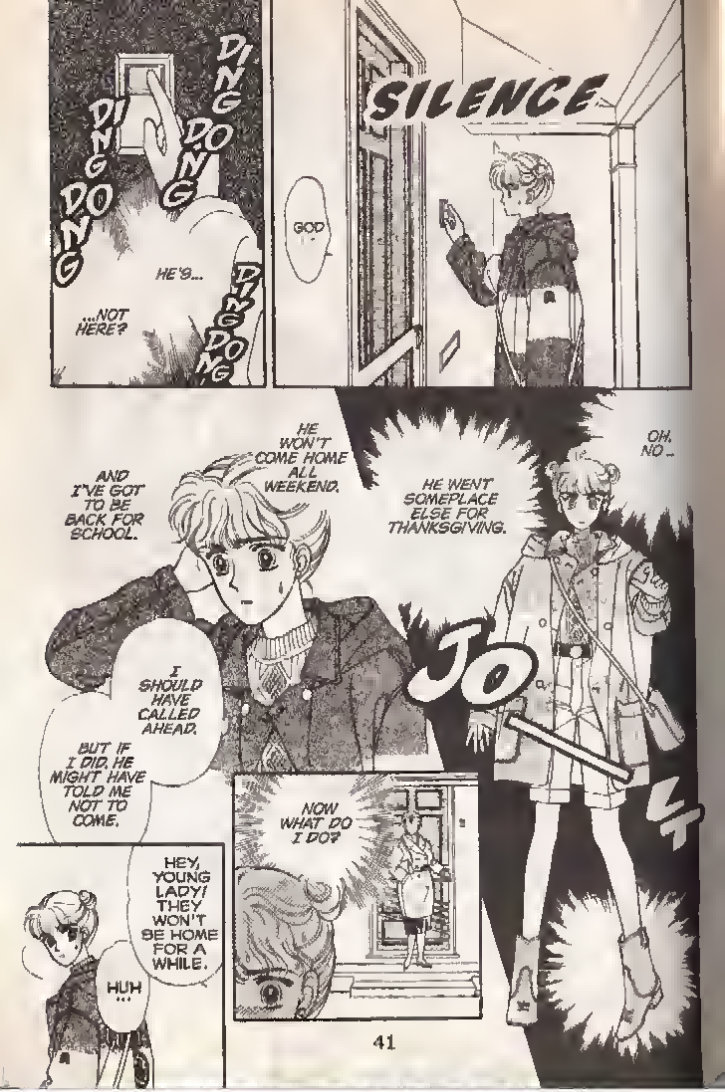

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HEY THERE!

WE'VE MADE IT TO THE LAST VOLUME OF CIPHER. I'M GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE READ THE WHOLE WAY THROUGH. I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD LAST THIS LONG. SORRY FOR HAVING CAUSED SO MUCH TROUBLE HERE AND THERE. I TRIED TO DO WHAT I COULD, BUT THIS WAS THE BEST I COULD DO (HOW PITIFUL). WHILE LIVING UP TO THE PROMISE TO MY READERS OF PROPERLY WRAPPING UP THIS SERIES, AND WHILE TRYING NOT TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND ME. FROM HERE ON, I'M GOING TO SLOW DOWN THE PACE AND TRY TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF MYSELF.

I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO THE ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE STAYED WITH ME TO THE END. I FINISHED WITHOUT INCIDENT THANKS TO THEM.

I THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART

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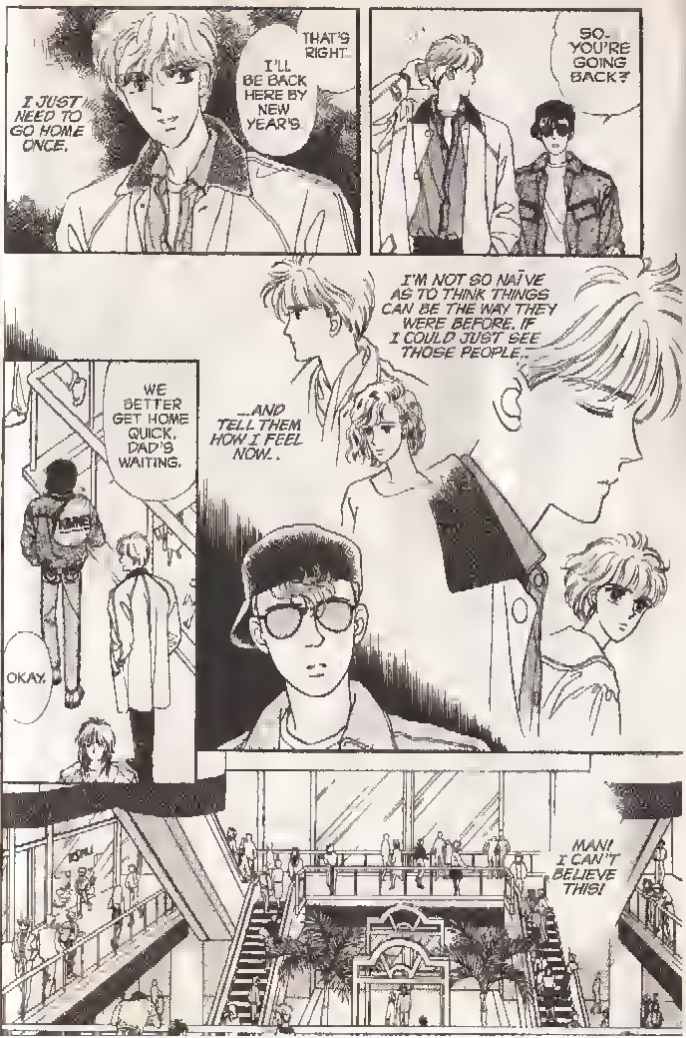
I JUST NEED TO GO HOME ONCE.
I'LL BE BACK HERE BY NEW YEAR'S.
THAT'S RIGHT.
SO... YOU'RE GOING BACK?
I'M NOT SO NAÏVE AS TO THINK THINGS CAN BE THE WAY THEY WERE BEFORE. IF I COULD JUST SEE THOSE PEOPLE...
...AND TELL THEM HOW I FEEL NOW.
WE BETTER GET HOME QUICK. DAD'S WAITING.
OKAY.
MAN! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

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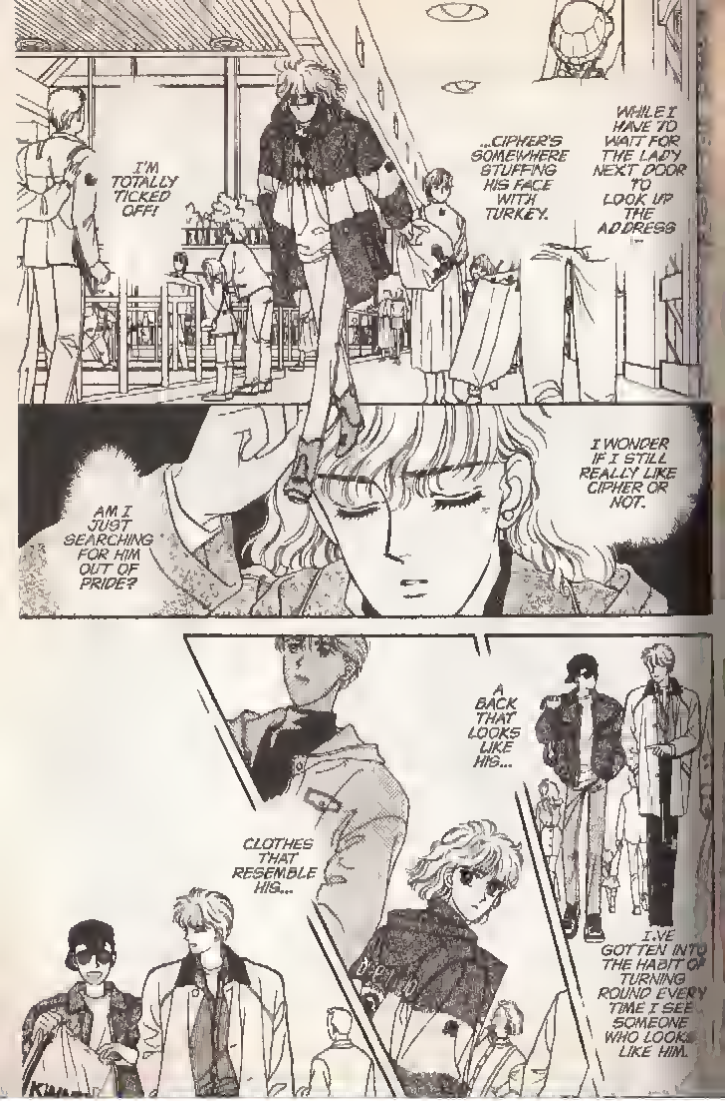
I'M TOTALLY TICKED OFF!
...CIPHER'S SOMEWHERE STUFFING HIS FACE WITH TURKEY.
WHILE I HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE LADY NEXT DOOR TO LOOK UP THE ADDRESS
I WONDER IF I STILL REALLY LIKE CIPHER OR NOT.
AM I JUST SEARCHING FOR HIM OUT OF PRIDE?
A BACK THAT LOOKS LIKE HIS...
CLOTHES THAT RESEMBLE HIS...
I'VE GOTTEN INTO THE HABIT OF TURNING ROUND EVERY TIME I SEE SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE HIM.

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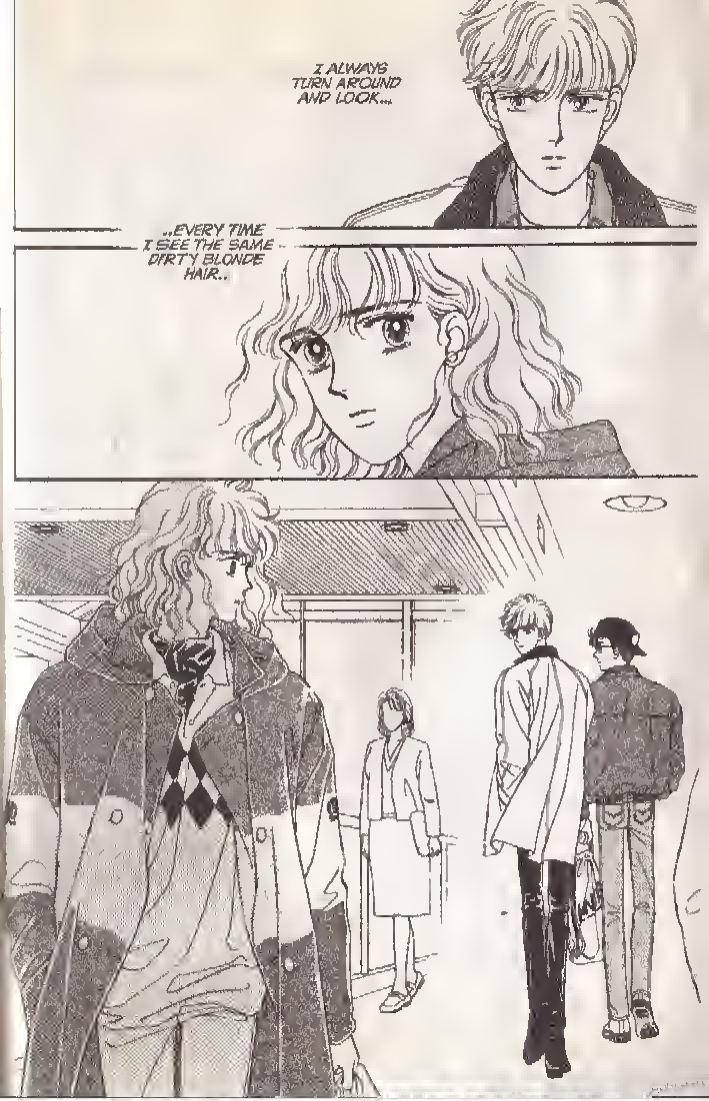

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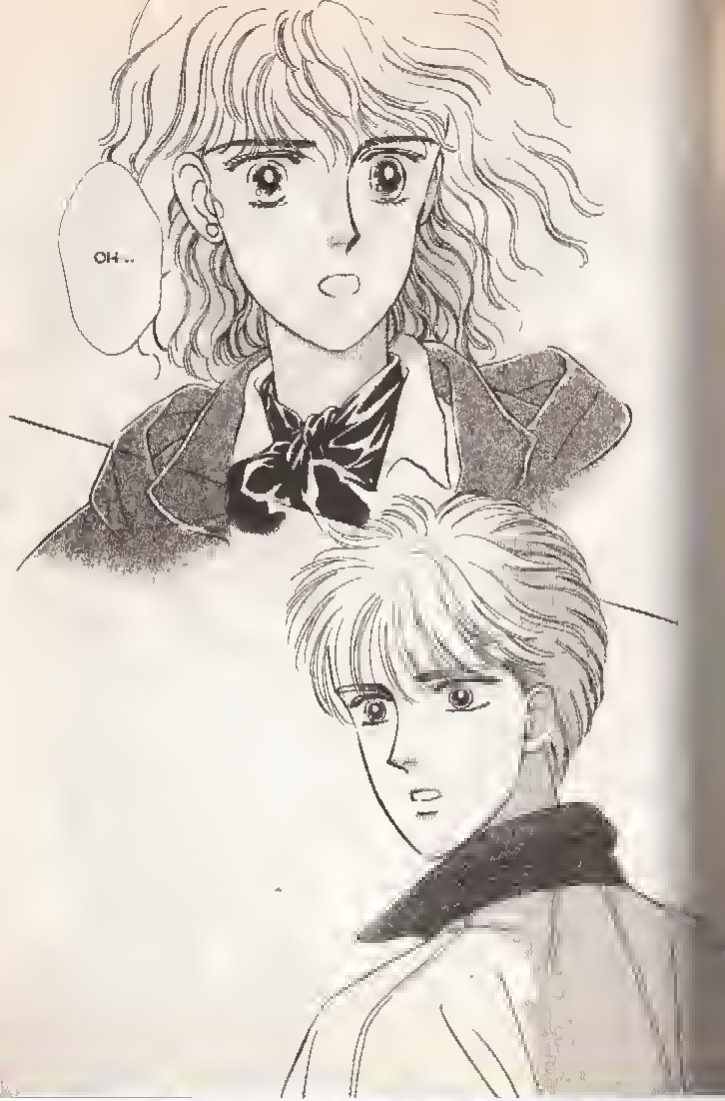

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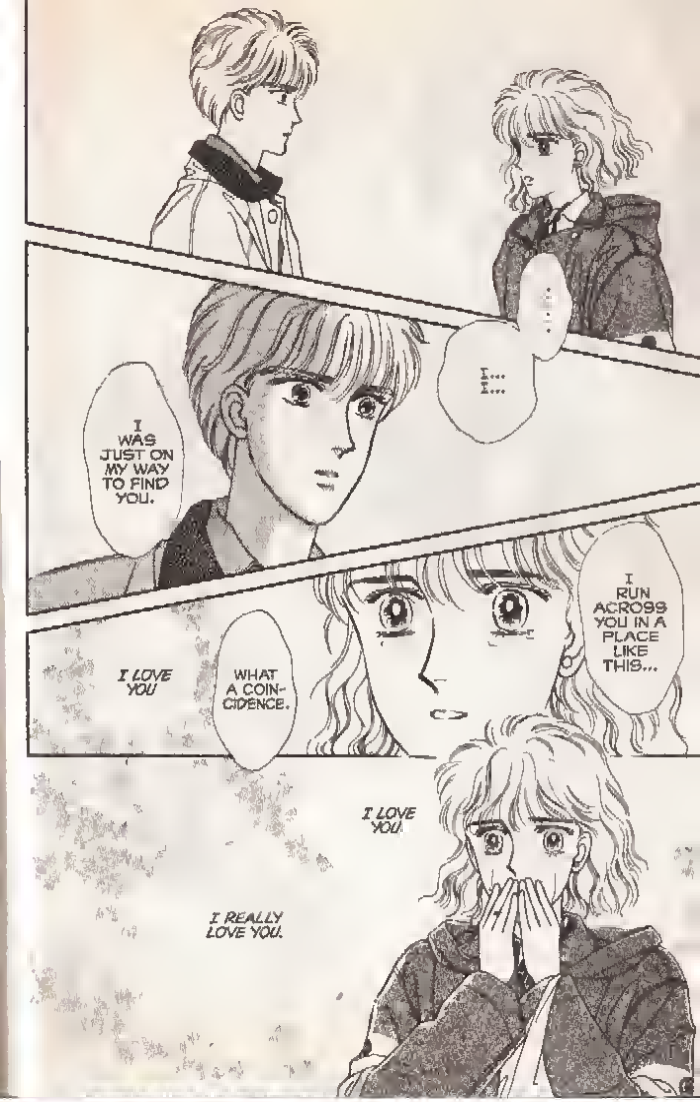
I...
I...
I WAS JUST ON MY WAY TO FIND YOU.
I RUN ACROSS YOU IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...
WHAT A COIN-CIDENCE.
I LOVE YOU
I LOVE YOU.
I REALLY LOVE YOU.

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!
THE GIRL FROM NEW YORK
WOW!
WHAT A SURPRISE!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE STARING. TAKE HER BACK TO OUR PLACE.
HAL.
I'VE GOTTA DROP BY MY PARENTS' HOUSE YOU STAY WITH HER.
GOOD LUCK.
THERE HE GOES
HAL .. THE CAR...
YOU TAKE IT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME I'LL HAVE THEM COME PICK ME UP.

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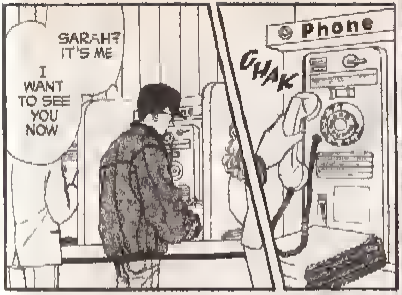

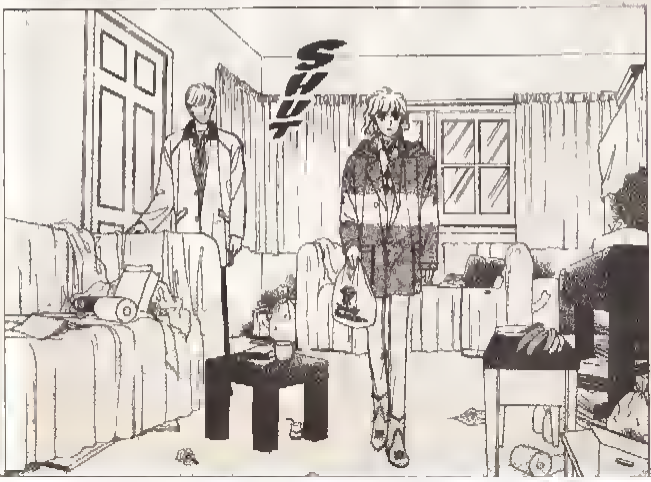

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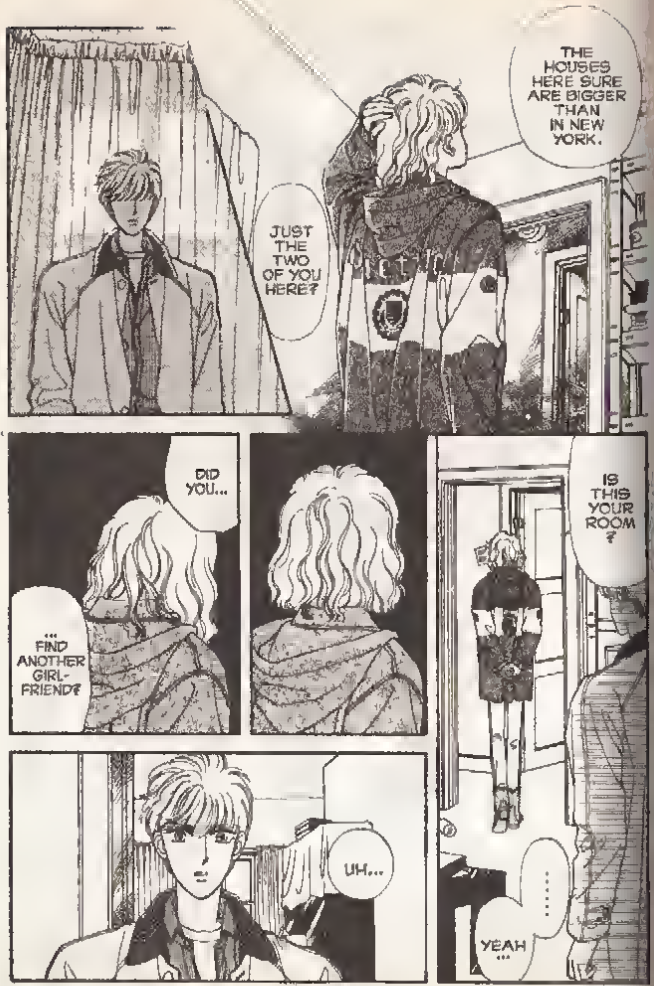
THE HOUSES HERE SURE ARE BIGGER THAN IN NEW YORK.
JUST THE TWO OF YOU HERE?
DID YOU...
... FIND ANOTHER GIRL-FRIEND?
IS THIS YOUR ROOM?
UH...
YEAH ...

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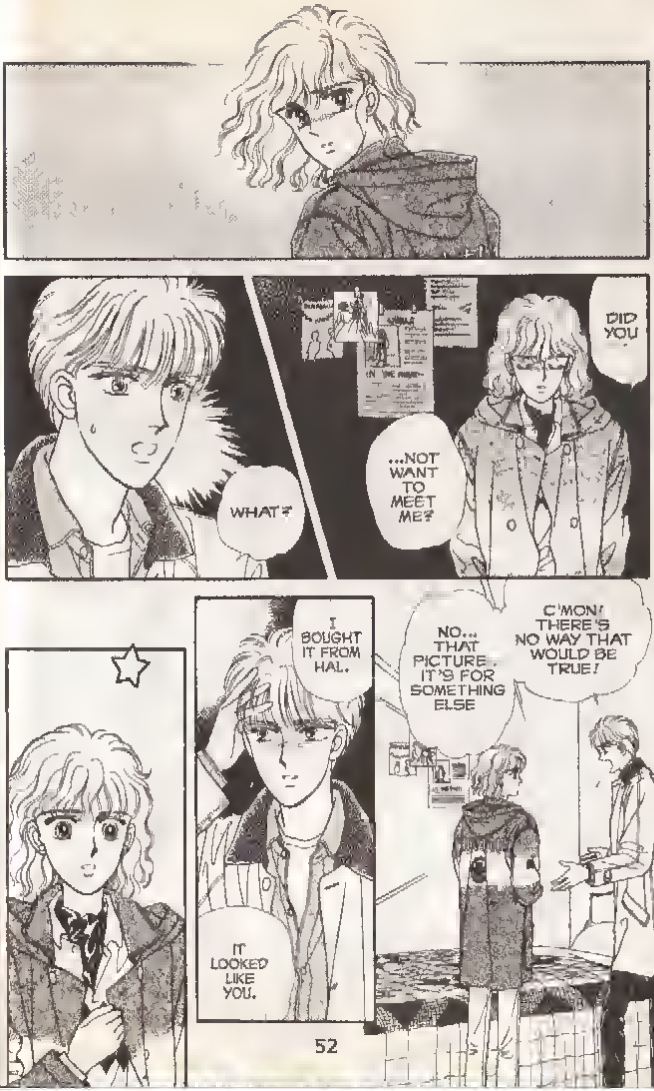
WHAT?
IN THE PAPER
...NOT WANT TO MEET ME?
DID YOU
I BOUGHT IT FROM HAL.
IT LOOKED LIKE YOU.
NO... THAT PICTURE... IT'S FOR SOMETHING ELSE
C'MON! THERE'S NO WAY THAT WOULD BE TRUE!

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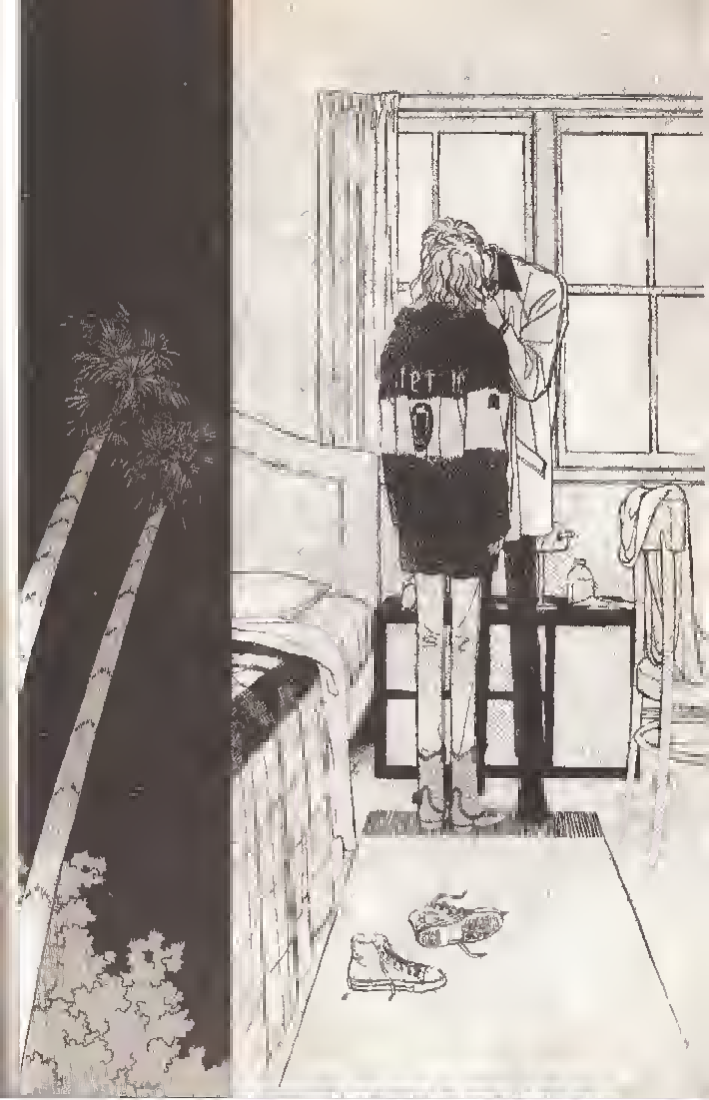

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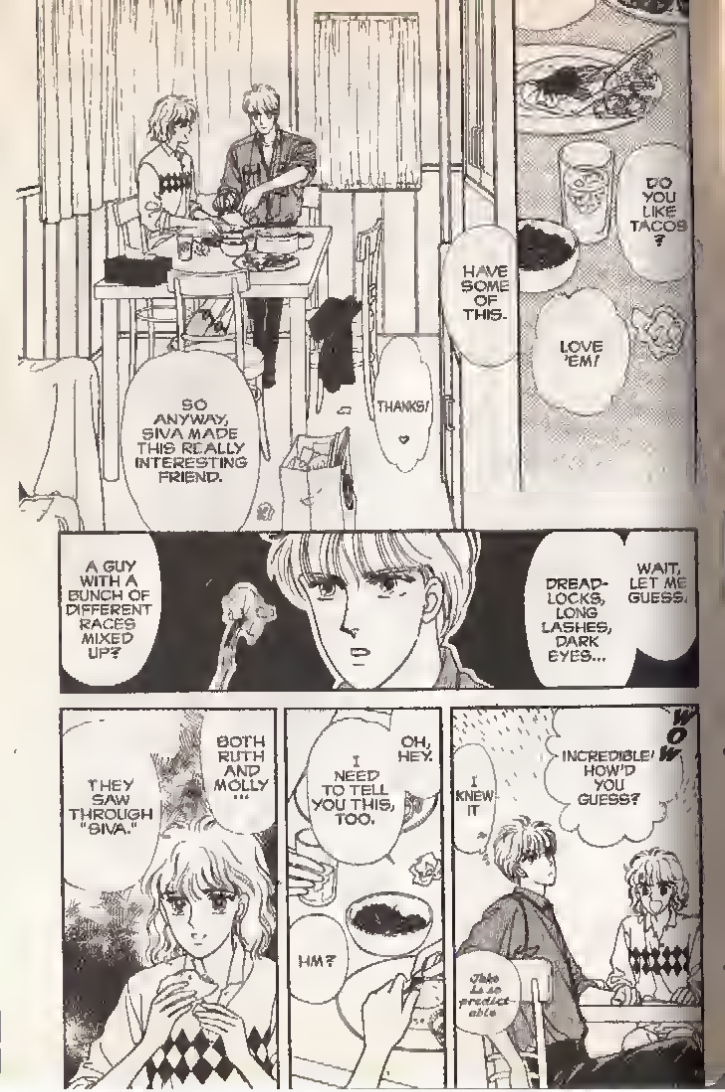
SO ANYWAY, SIVA MADE THIS REALLY INTERESTING FRIEND.
THANKS!
HAVE SOME OF THIS.
DO YOU LIKE TACOS?
LOVE 'EM!
A GUY WITH A BUNCH OF DIFFERENT RACES MIXED UP?
WAIT, LET ME GUESS.
DREAD-LOCKS, LONG LASHES, DARK EYES...
THEY SAW THROUGH "SIVA."
BOTH RUTH AND MOLLY ...
OH, HEY.
I NEED TO TELL YOU THIS, TOO.
HM?
I KNEW IT
INCREDIBLE! HOW'D YOU GUESS?
WOW
This is so predictable

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SHE'S THE ONE WHO FOUND YOU HERE.
YOUR AGENT IN NEW YORK, TOO.
IT'S KINDA... STRANGE.
I'M HAPPY
.....
DON'T WORRY. I HAVEN'T TOLD ANYONE ELSE.
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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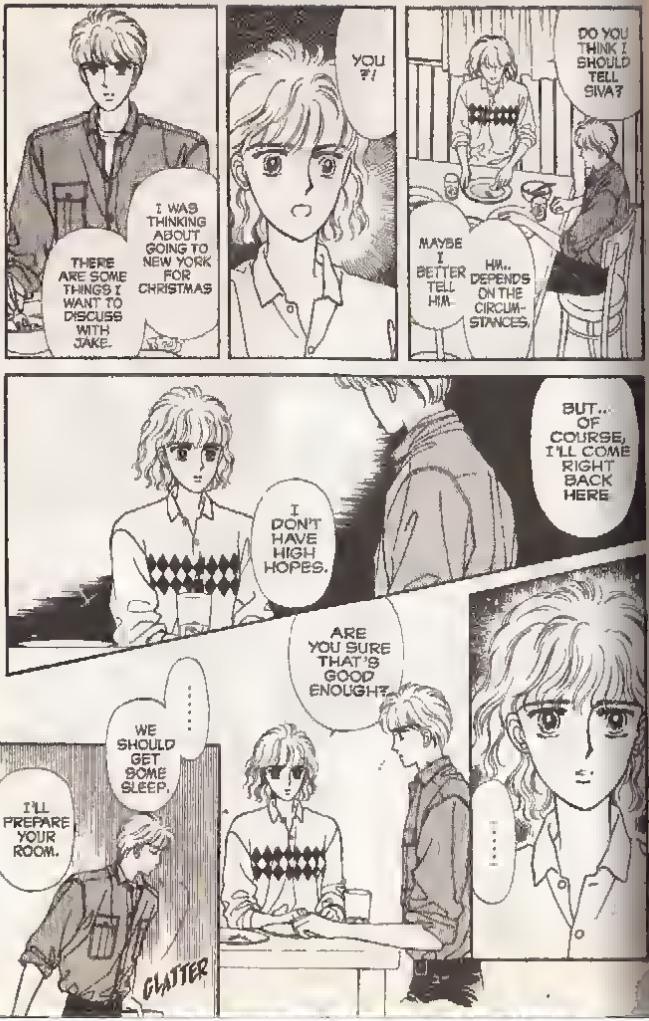
THERE ARE SOME THINGS I WANT TO DISCUSS WITH JAKE.
I WAS THINKING ABOUT GOING TO NEW YORK FOR CHRISTMAS
YOU ?!
DO YOU THINK I SHOULD TELL SIVA?
HM... DEPENDS ON THE CIRCUM-STANCES.
MAYBE I BETTER TELL HIM.
I DON'T HAVE HIGH HOPES.
BUT.. OF COURSE, I'LL COME RIGHT BACK HERE
ARE YOU SURE THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH?
.....
.....
WE SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP.
I'LL PREPARE YOUR ROOM.
CLATTER

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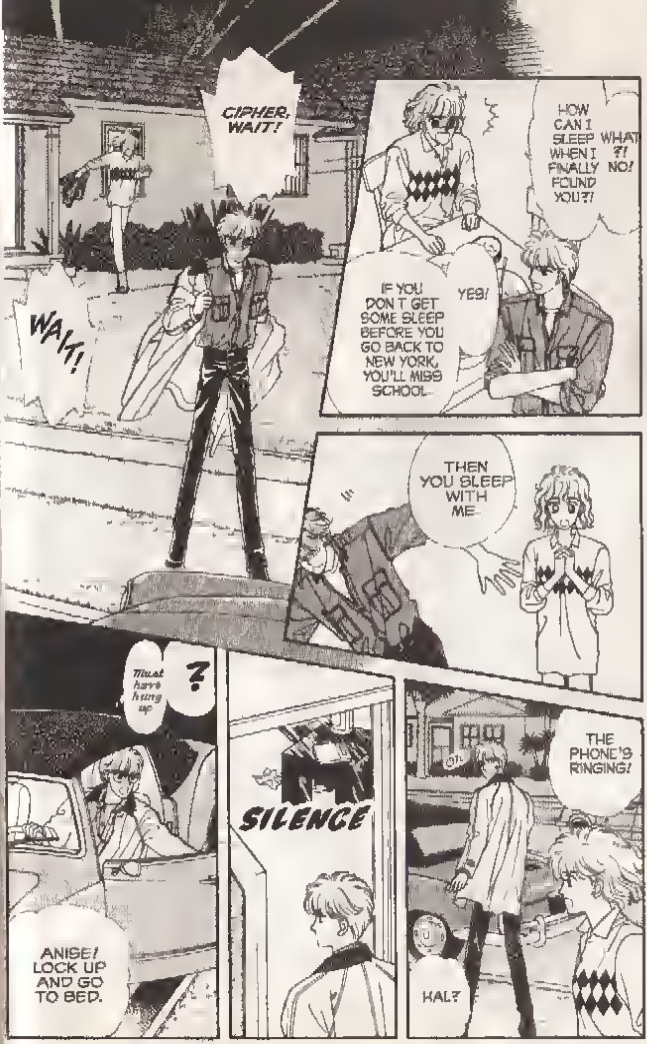
CIPHER, WAIT!
WAIT!
HOW CAN I SLEEP WHEN I FINALLY FOUND YOU?!
WHAT?! NO!
IF YOU DON'T GET SOME SLEEP BEFORE YOU GO BACK TO NEW YORK, YOU'LL MISS SCHOOL.
YES!
THEN YOU SLEEP WITH ME.
Must have hung up
?
SILENCE
THE PHONE'S RINGING!
ANISE! LOCK UP AND GO TO BED.
HAL?

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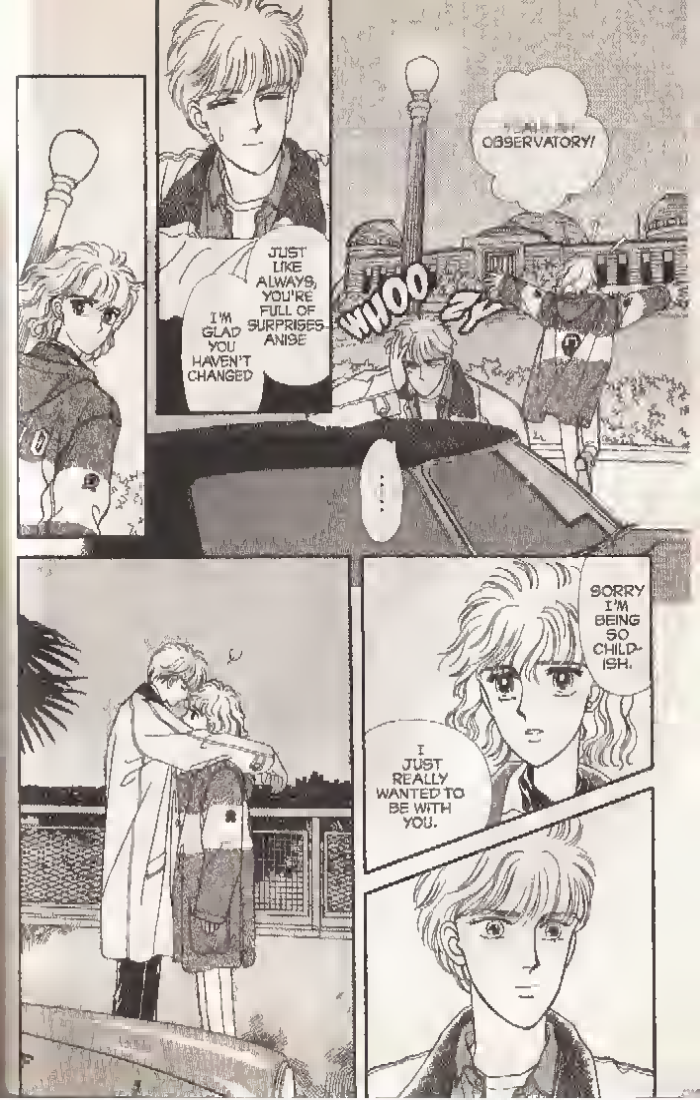
OBSERVATORY!
WHOO
I'M GLAD YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED
JUST LIKE ALWAYS, YOU'RE FULL OF SURPRISES ANISE
SORRY I'M BEING SO CHILDISH.
I JUST REALLY WANTED TO BE WITH YOU.

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IT'S OKAY.
ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO BE WITH YOU, TOO.
YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT SIVA, WEREN'T YOU?
.....
THANKS FOR SAYING YOU WANTED TO BE WITH ME.
THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO HEAR.

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I WANT TO DO SOMETHING FOR CIPHER.
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY HARD FOR HER...
...TO HOLD ONTO HER FEELINGS ALL THIS TIME.
SHE MUST HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH SO MUCH...
THIS GIRL...
...CAME ALL THE WAY HERE JUST TO SAY THIS?

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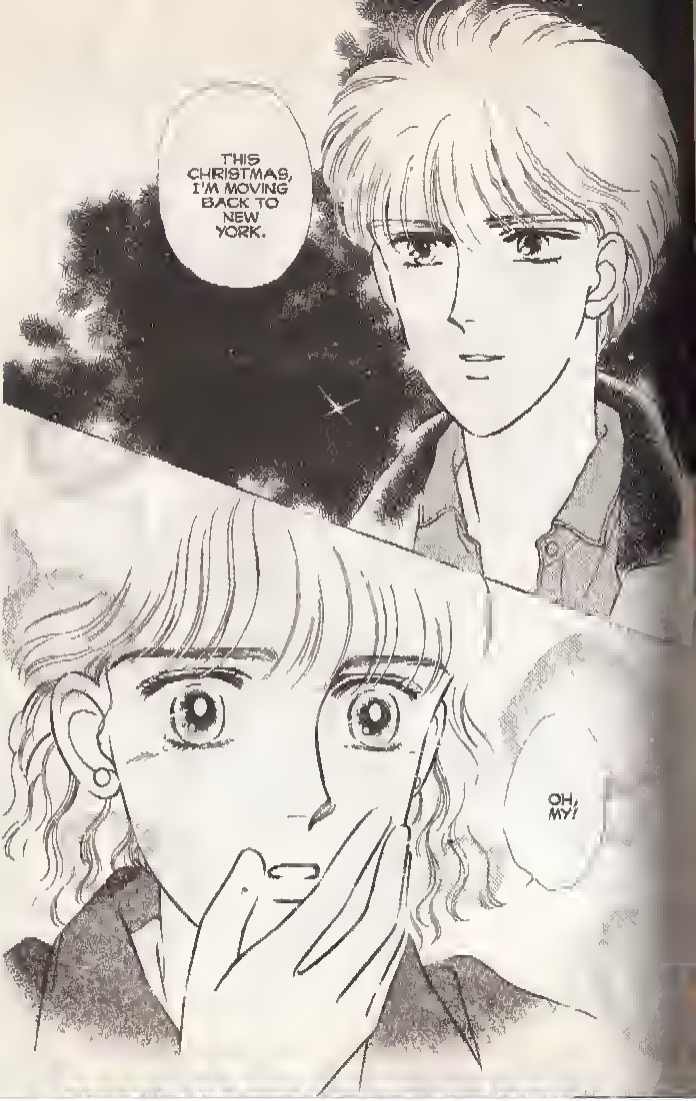

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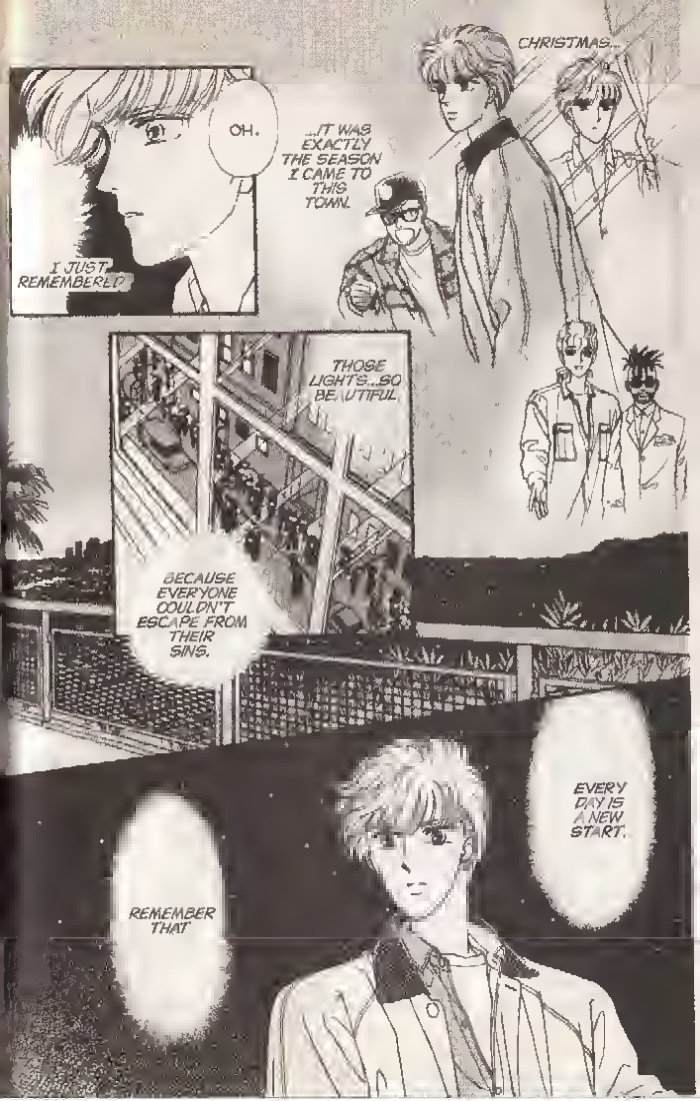
CHRISTMAS...
...IT WAS EXACTLY THE SEASON I CAME TO THIS TOWN.
OH.
I JUST REMEMBERED
THOSE LIGHTS...SO BEAUTIFUL.
BECAUSE EVERYONE COULDN'T ESCAPE FROM THEIR SINS.
EVERY DAY IS A NEW START.
REMEMBER THAT

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CIPHER

Volume 11

By Minako Narita

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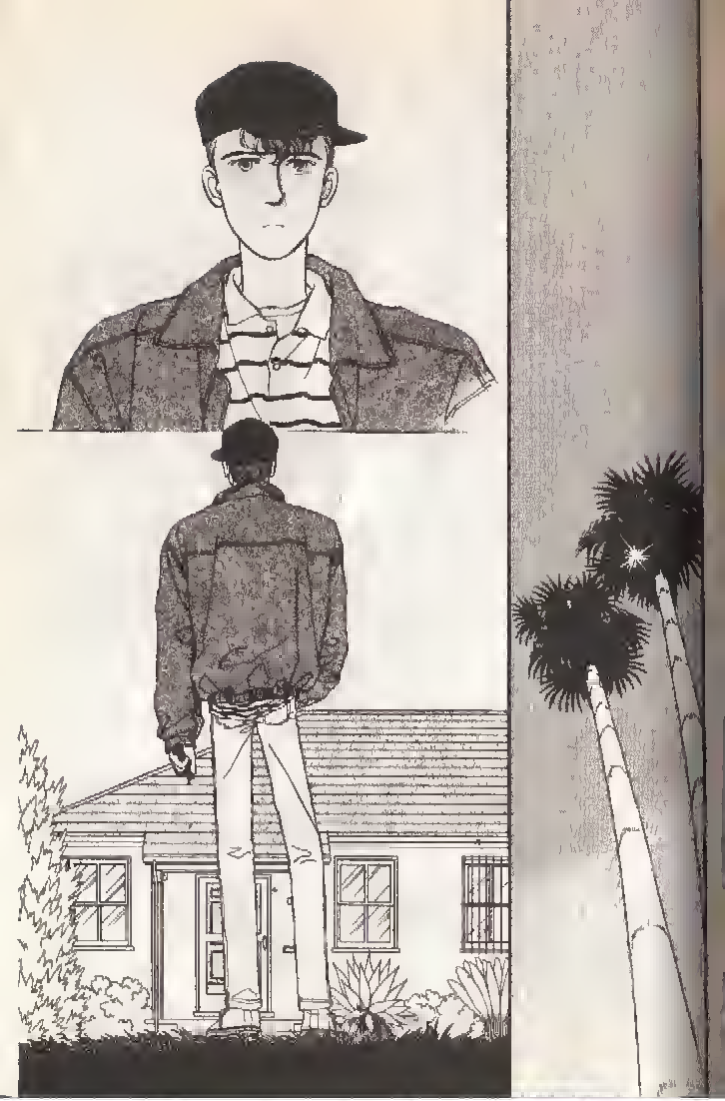

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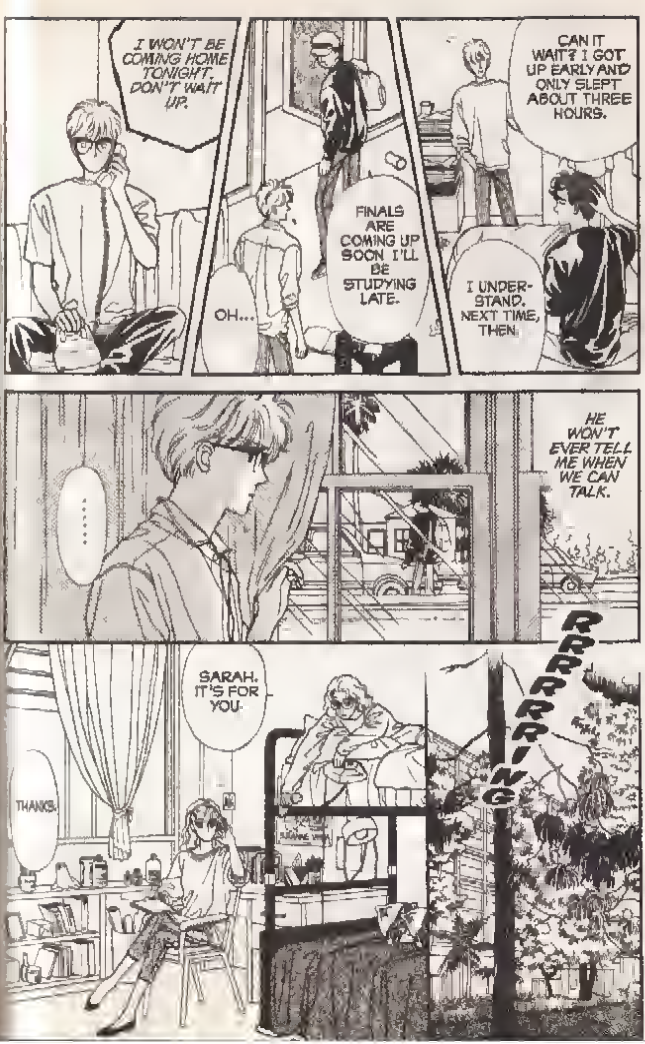
I WON'T BE COMING HOME TONIGHT. DON'T WAIT UP.
OH...
FINALS ARE COMING UP SOON I'LL BE STUDYING LATE.
I UNDERSTAND. NEXT TIME, THEN.
CAN IT WAIT? I GOT UP EARLY AND ONLY SLEPT ABOUT THREE HOURS.
.....
HE WON'T EVER TELL ME WHEN WE CAN TALK.
RRRRRRING
SARAH. IT'S FOR YOU.
THANKS.

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RECENTLY IN AN INTERVIEW, I WAS ASKED "WHAT KIND OF FAN LETTERS DO YOU GET?" I COULDN'T COME UP WITH A GOOD ANSWER. AFTERWARDS, I REALIZED THAT I DON'T REALLY READ THEM AS "FAN LETTERS." A LOT OF LETTERS ARE ABOUT RATHER PERSONAL SUFFERINGS, AND OTHER HAD DETAILED COMMENTS ABOUT THE SERIES' CONTENTS. SO I DON'T THINK OF THEM AS FAN LETTERS, MS. COMICATE.* (GOT ONE AT A BOOK STORE).

SPEAKING OF WHICH, THANKS TO THE PERSON WHO POINTED OUT THAT I GOT THE DIALOGUE FROM "EAST OF EDEN" WRONG IN VOLUME 2. (IT COULDN'T BE "CALEB"). SOMEONE ELSE POINTED OUT THAT THE JAPANESE SCHOOL YEAR DOESN'T END ON APRIL 1. ANOTHER BAD NEW JERSEY IS SCHOOL YEAR IS THE SAME AS JAPAN (ALTHOUGH IT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT BY SCHOOL DISTRICT). THANKS FOR ALL THESE LETTERS.

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT SUCH AN IMPORTANT TIME

HOW MUCH LONGER ARE EXAMS?

THEY FINISHED ON THE TWELFTH.

OH.. ROY!

YOU GOT A MOMENT?

THEY'RE OVER?!

.....

SHIA'S DIARY

I received a package from Shoji Gatoh! It's the first in ten years...

The 7th artist. It's really rare.

Just when I heard Gatoh's back, you came.

SO WHY IS HE STILL SO BUSY?

?

THAT WAS THREE DAYS AGO!

HELLO? ROY? STILL THERE?

*NOTE: COMICATE IS A MANGA INFORMATION MAGAZINE PUBLISHED IN JAPAN

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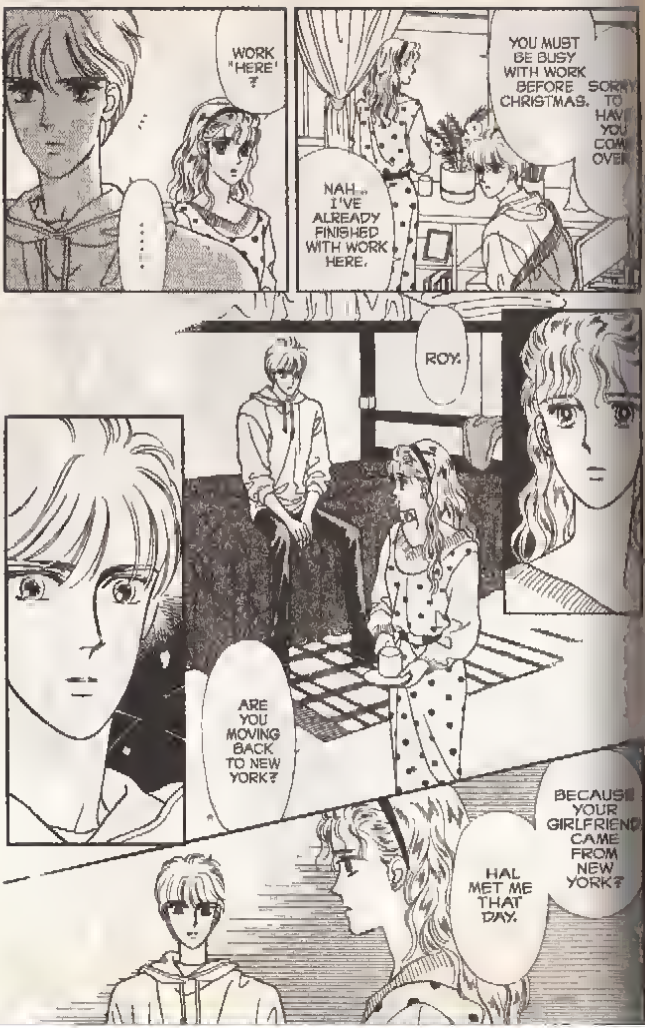
WORK "HERE"?
.....
NAH... I'VE ALREADY FINISHED WITH WORK HERE.
YOU MUST BE BUSY WITH WORK BEFORE CHRISTMAS. SORRY TO HAVE YOU COME OVER
ROY.
ARE YOU MOVING BACK TO NEW YORK?
HAL MET ME THAT DAY.
BECAUSE YOUR GIRLFRIEND CAME FROM NEW YORK?

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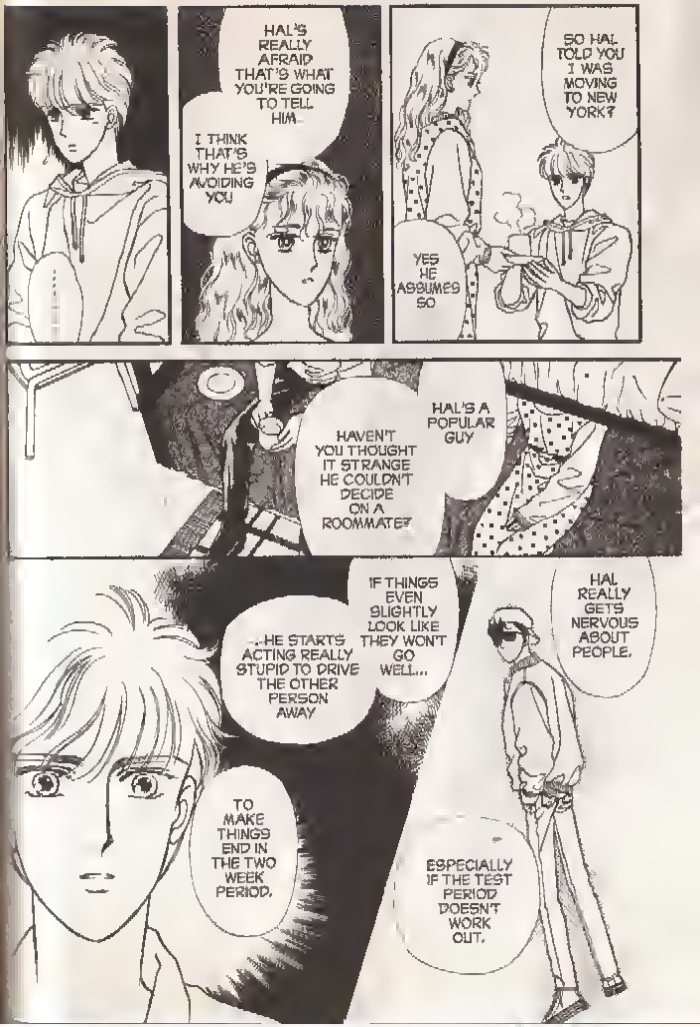
HAL'S REALLY AFRAID THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO TELL HIM.
I THINK THAT'S WHY HE'S AVOIDING YOU
SO HAL TOLD YOU I WAS MOVING TO NEW YORK?
YES HE ASSUMES SO
HAL'S A POPULAR GUY
HAVEN'T YOU THOUGHT IT STRANGE HE COULDN'T DECIDE ON A ROOMMATE?
HAL REALLY GETS NERVOUS ABOUT PEOPLE.
IF THINGS EVEN SLIGHTLY LOOK LIKE THEY WON'T GO WELL...
...HE STARTS ACTING REALLY STUPID TO DRIVE THE OTHER PERSON AWAY
TO MAKE THINGS END IN THE TWO WEEK PERIOD.
ESPECIALLY IF THE TEST PERIOD DOESN'T WORK OUT.

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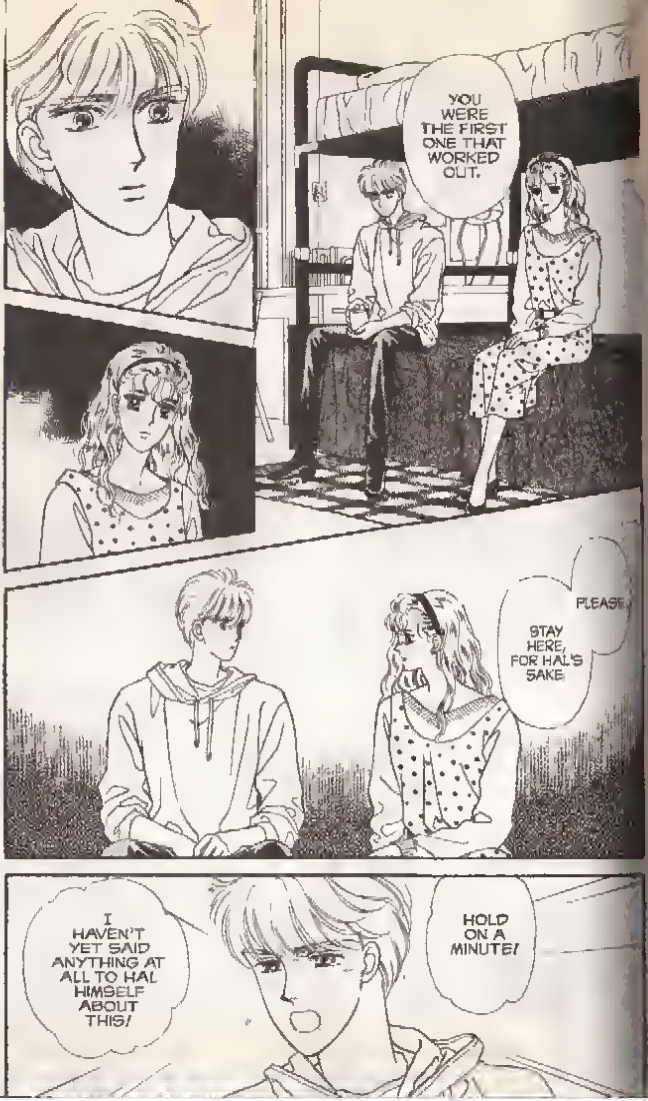
YOU WERE THE FIRST ONE THAT WORKED OUT.
PLEASE... STAY HERE, FOR HAL'S SAKE.
HOLD ON A MINUTE!
I HAVEN'T YET SAID ANYTHING AT ALL TO HAL HIMSELF ABOUT THIS!

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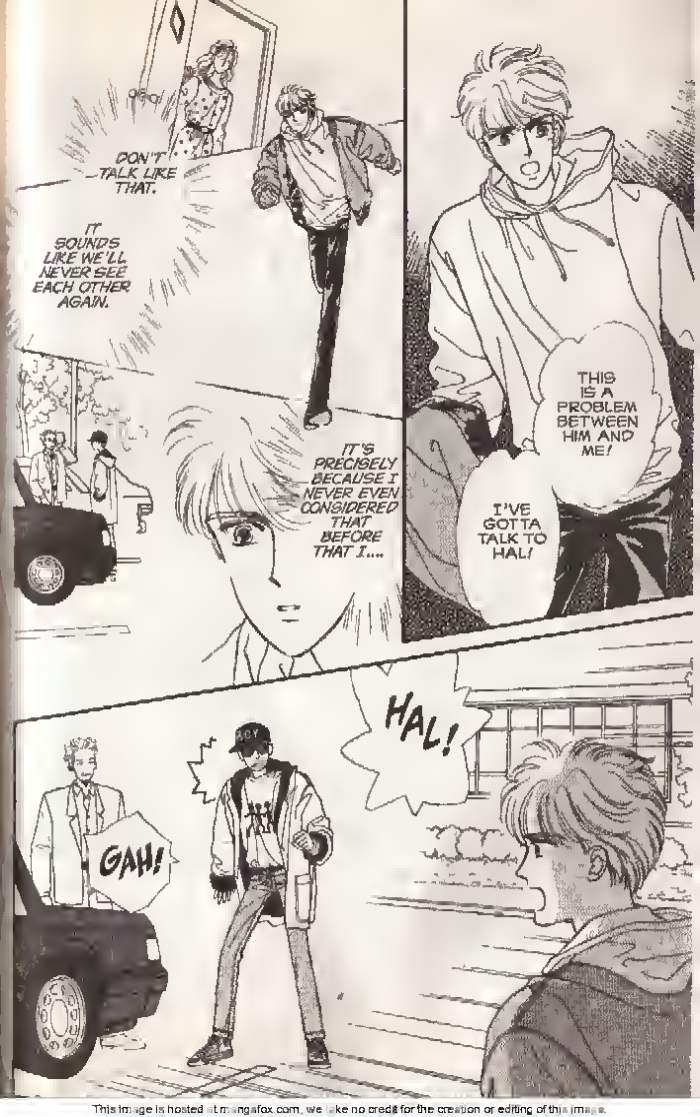
DON'T TALK LIKE THAT.
IT SOUNDS LIKE WE'LL NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.
IT'S PRECISELY BECAUSE I NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED THAT BEFORE THAT I....
THIS IS A PROBLEM BETWEEN HIM AND ME!
I'VE GOTTA TALK TO HAL!
HAL!
GAH!

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LET'S DO IT NEXT TIME. I'VE GOTTA STUDY.
GLAD I CAUGHT YOU I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT, HAL
I'VE GOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT, TOO.
UH .. SORRY. I'VE GOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TAKE CARE OF.
YOU'VE ALWAYS GOTTA "STUDY."
WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN ME, HAL?!
HAL!
No way!
WAH..!
!
GASP

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SCREECH
CRAP!
THAT'S EVEN WORSE THAN BREAKING UP WITH ME.
HE WOULDN'T EVEN LOOK ME IN THE FACE.
AM I SUPPOSED TO PUT UP WITH THIS?
"I'VE NEVER BEEN SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN."
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
OY
HE'S STILL FOLLOWING ME.

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BOY
HAL
HEH HEH! SORRY I'VE BEEN RUNNING AWAY FROM YOU LIKE THAT!
HAL
SHA SHA
HAL
IT'D BE A SHAME TO LEAVE HER ALL ALONE THERE, RIGHT?
I KNOW... YOU'RE MOVING BACK TO NEW YORK, RIGHT?

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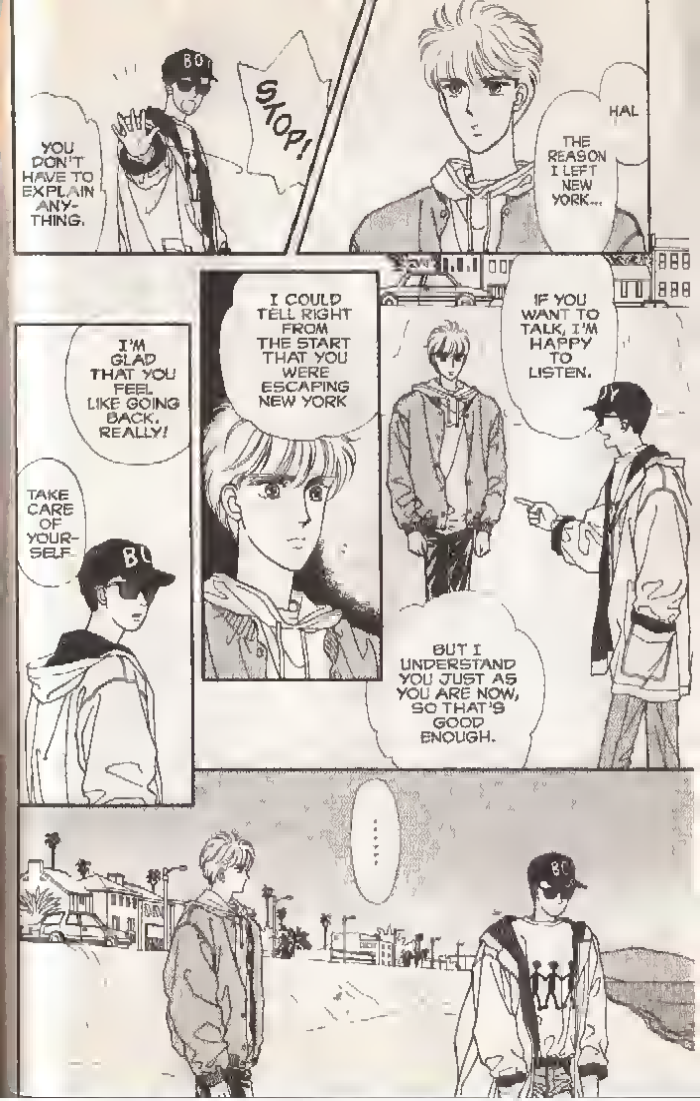
YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN ANY-THING.
STOP!
HAL
THE REASON I LEFT NEW YORK...
IF YOU WANT TO TALK, I'M HAPPY TO LISTEN.
I COULD TELL RIGHT FROM THE START THAT YOU WERE ESCAPING NEW YORK
I'M GLAD THAT YOU FEEL LIKE GOING BACK, REALLY!
TAKE CARE OF YOUR-SELF.
BUT I UNDERSTAND YOU JUST AS YOU ARE NOW, SO THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH.
.....

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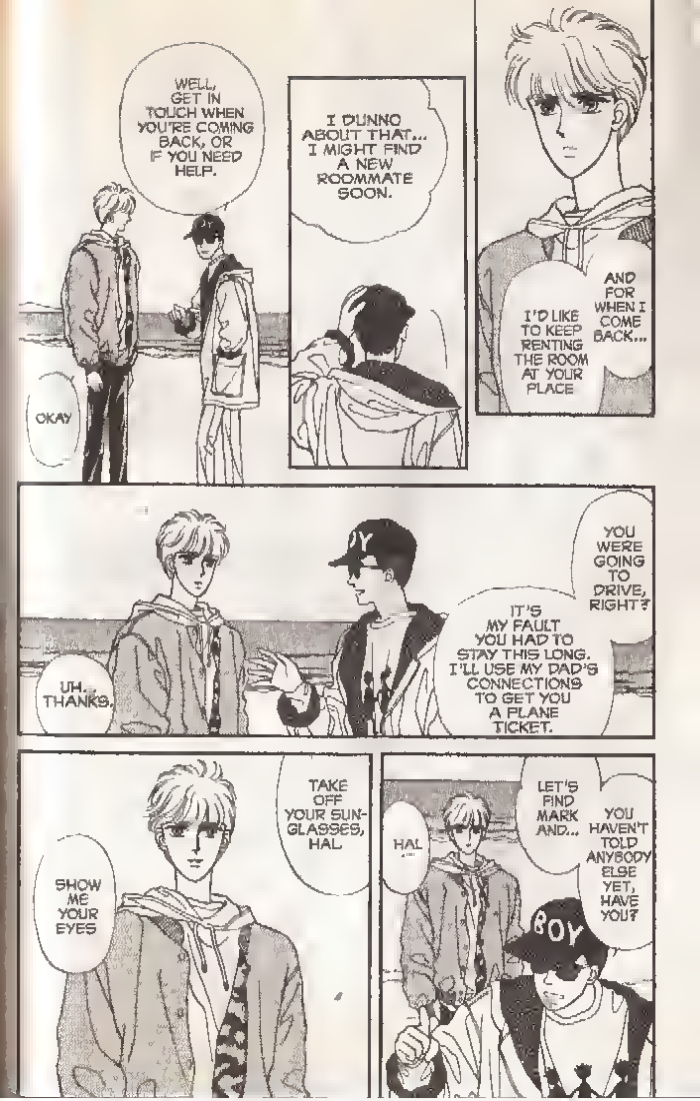
WELL, GET IN TOUCH WHEN YOU'RE COMING BACK, OR IF YOU NEED HELP.
I DUNNO ABOUT THAT... I MIGHT FIND A NEW ROOMMATE SOON.
AND FOR WHEN I COME BACK...
I'D LIKE TO KEEP RENTING THE ROOM AT YOUR PLACE
OKAY
YOU WERE GOING TO DRIVE, RIGHT?
IT'S MY FAULT YOU HAD TO STAY THIS LONG. I'LL USE MY DAD'S CONNECTIONS TO GET YOU A PLANE TICKET.
UH, THANKS.
TAKE OFF YOUR SUN-GLASSES, HAL
SHOW ME YOUR EYES
LET'S FIND MARK AND...
YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ANYBODY ELSE YET, HAVE YOU?
HAL
BOY

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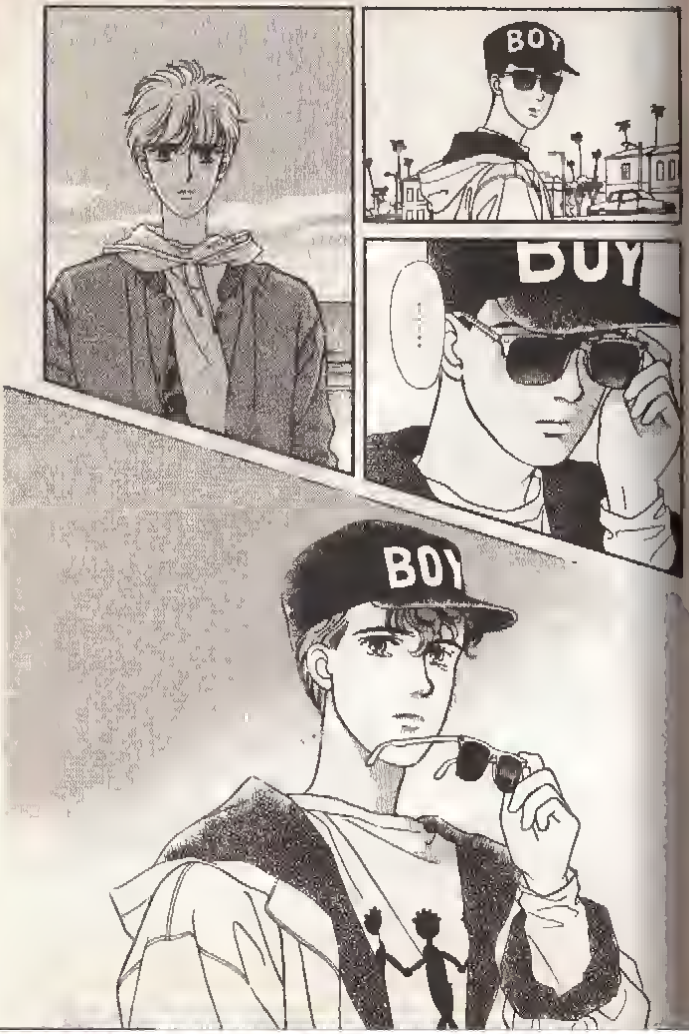

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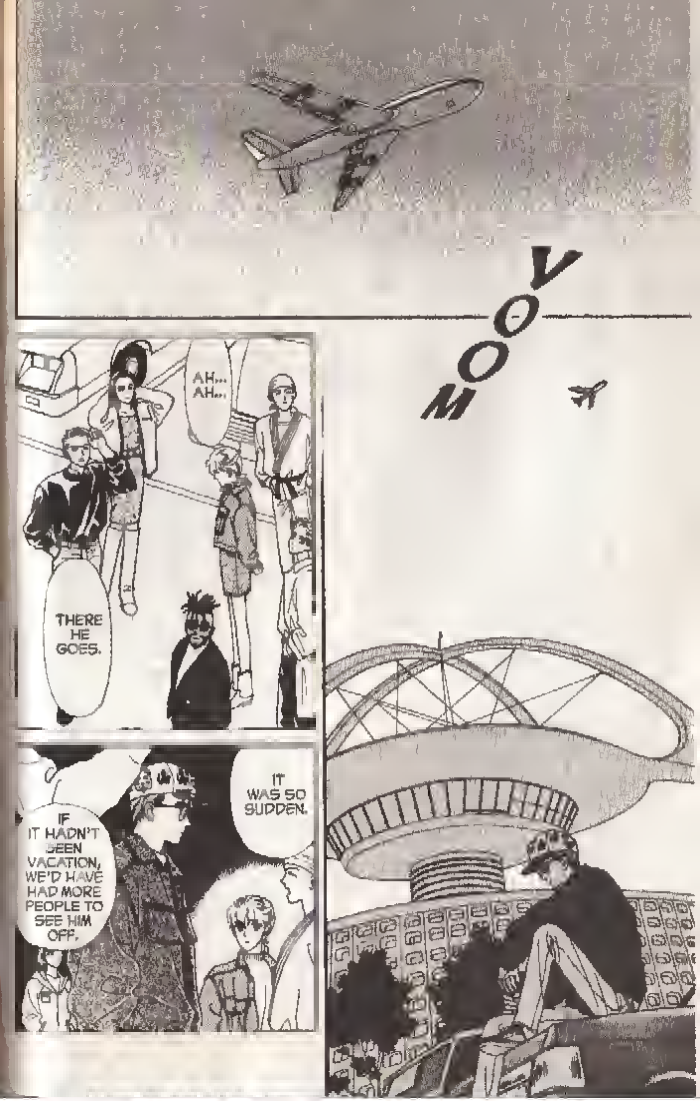

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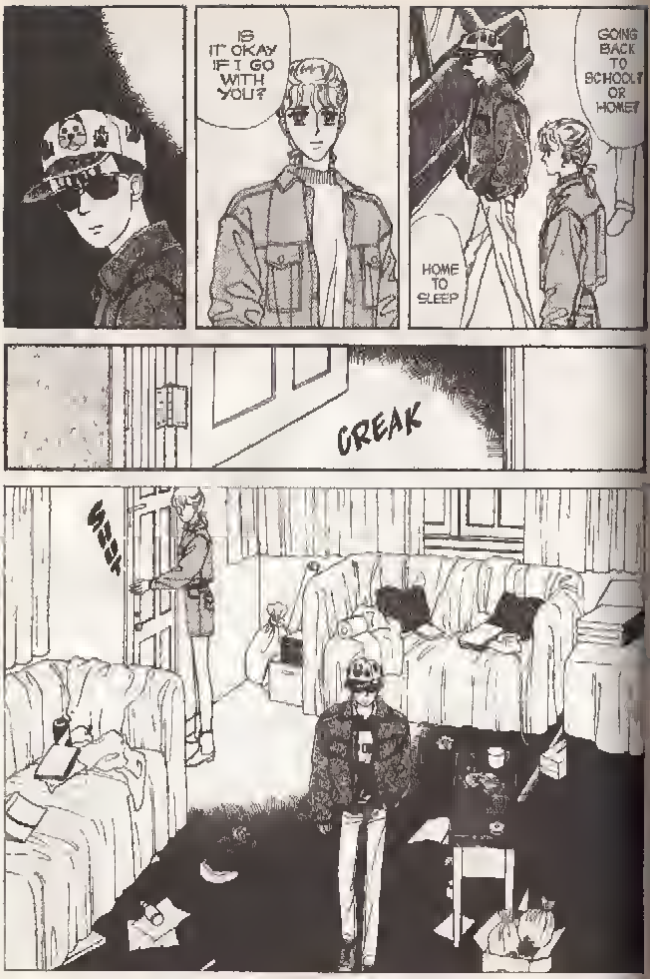

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YOU'RE WORRIED, AREN'T YOU?
IF IT LOOKS LIKE THINGS AREN'T WORKING OUT FOR HIM IN NEW YORK, I CAN BRING HIM BACK HERE.
HUH?
NEW YORK
DON'T BE A MORON!
...WHY SHOULD YOU GET TO GO SEE HIM? HUH?
IF ME, HIS BEST FRIEND, IS STUCK HERE
MAYBE YOU'RE SAYING ALL THIS FOR MY SAKE, BUT A WOMAN'S GOT NO PLACE BUTTING INTO STUFF LIKE THIS!
HE'LL BE FINE NO MATTER WHERE HE GOES!

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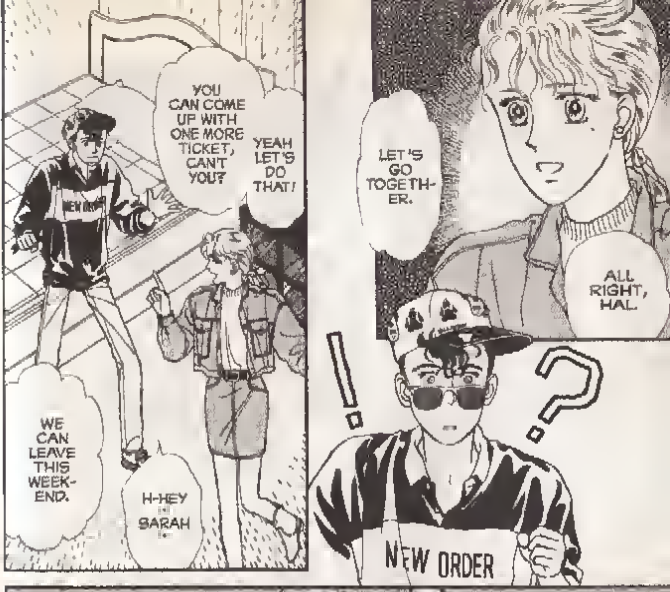
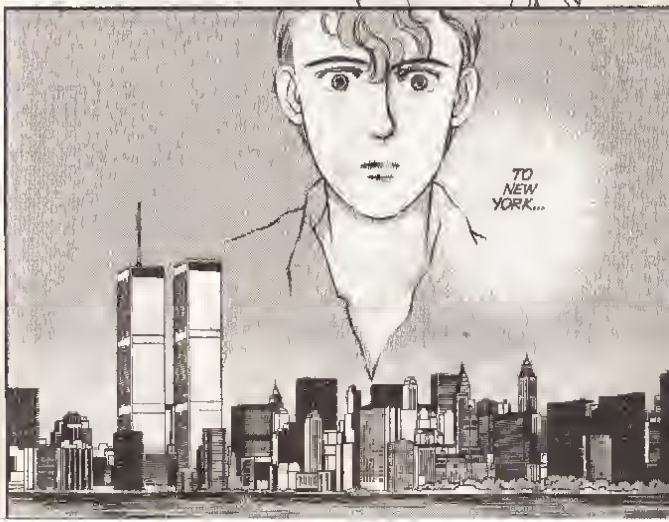

YOU CAN COME UP WITH ONE MORE TICKET, CAN'T YOU?
YEAH, LET'S DO THAT!
WE CAN LEAVE THIS WEEK-END.
H-HEY SARAH
LET'S GO TOGETH-ER.
ALL RIGHT, HAL
NEW ORDER



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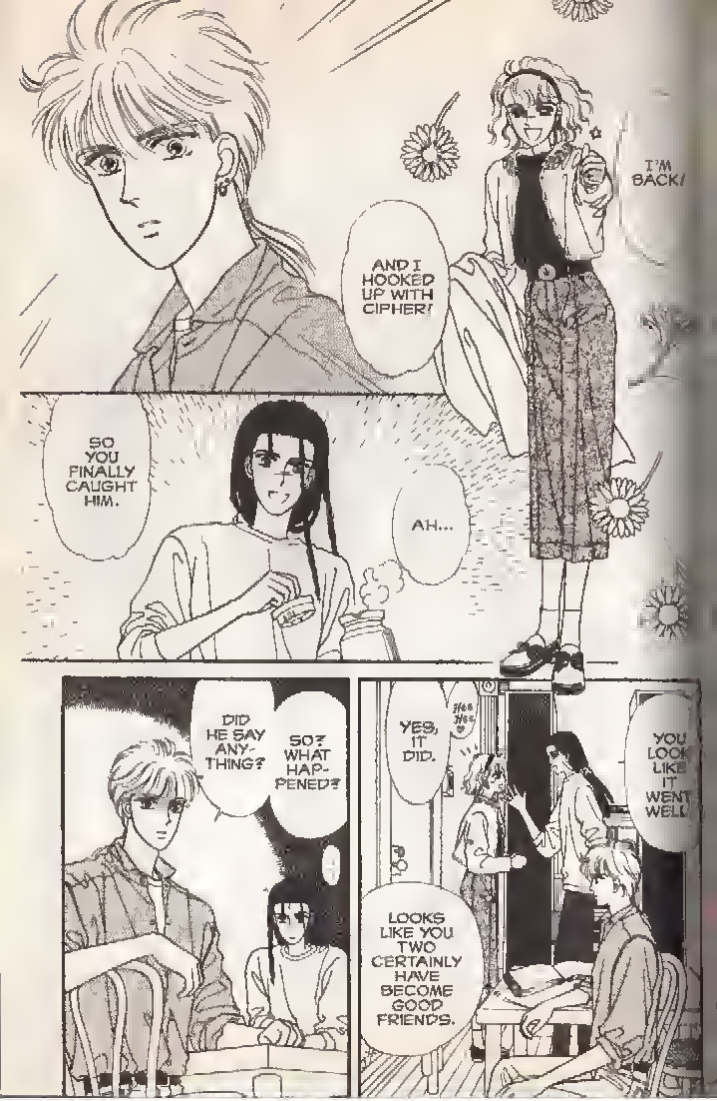
I'M BACK!
AND I HOOKED UP WITH CIPHER!
SO YOU FINALLY CAUGHT HIM.
AH...
DID HE SAY ANY-THING?
SO? WHAT HAP-PENED?
YES, IT DID.
YOU LOOK LIKE IT WENT WELL
LOOKS LIKE YOU TWO CERTAINLY HAVE BECOME GOOD FRIENDS.

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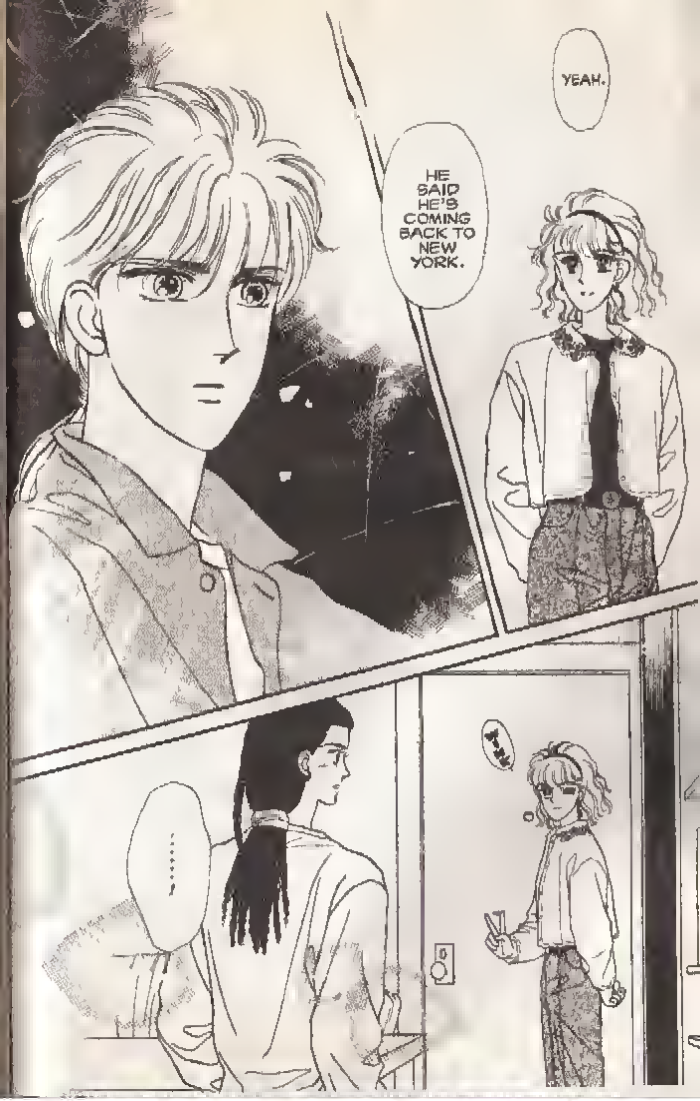

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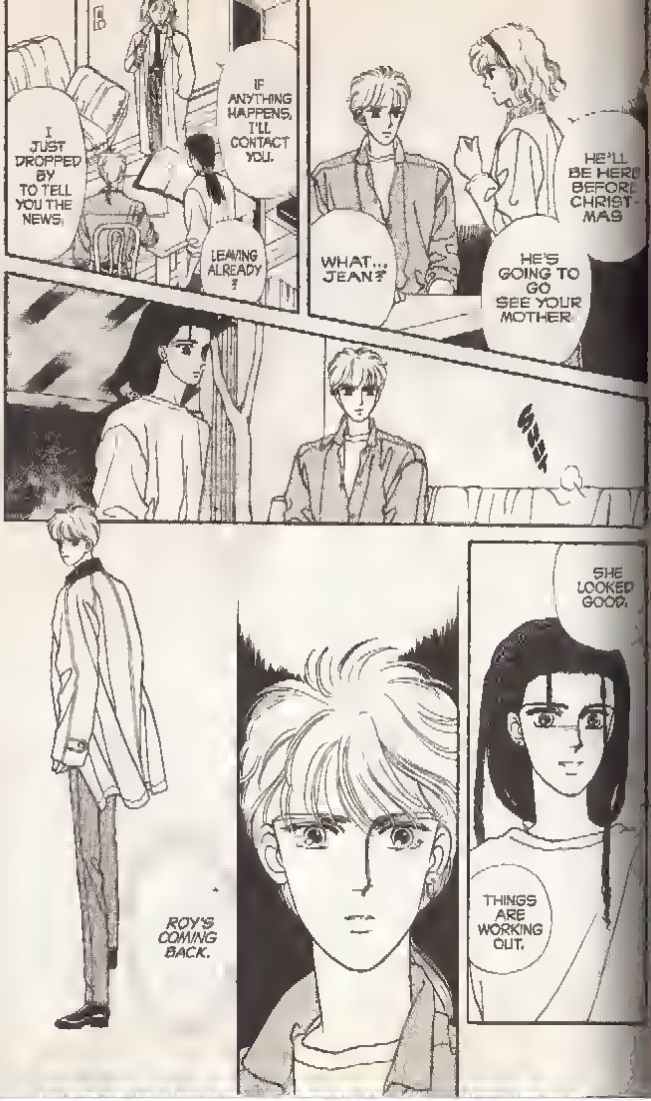
I JUST DROPPED BY TO TELL YOU THE NEWS.
IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, I'LL CONTACT YOU.
LEAVING ALREADY?
WHAT... JEAN?
HE'S GOING TO GO SEE YOUR MOTHER.
HE'LL BE HERE BEFORE CHRISTMAS
SIGH
ROY'S COMING BACK.
SHE LOOKED GOOD.
THINGS ARE WORKING OUT.

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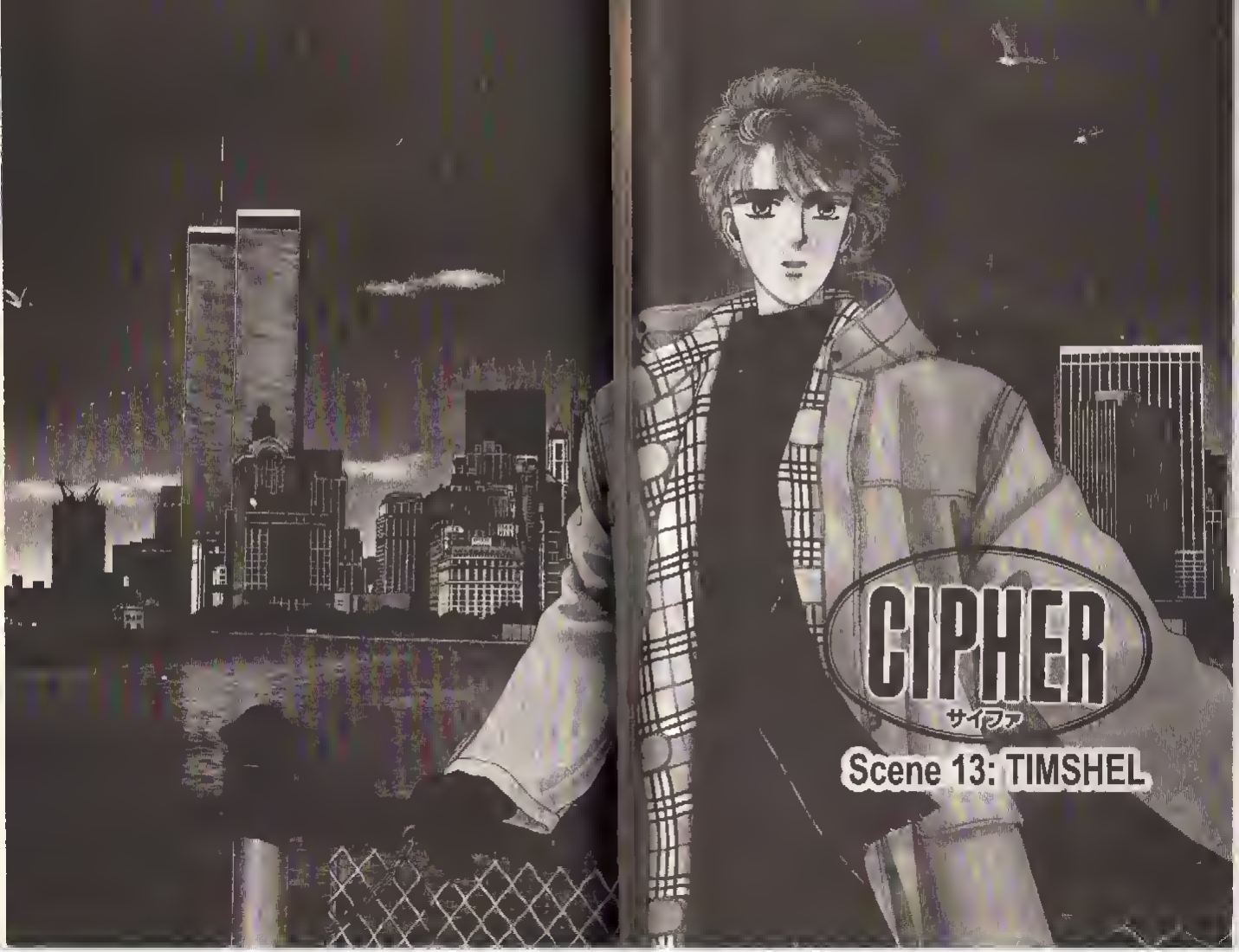

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UNTIL RECENTLY, THE REPAIR FRAME WAS AROUND HER, AND SHE WAS "THE STATUE OF BONDAGE."
Ha ha ha
I'M GLAD WE CAN SEE IT NOW
HEY, LOOK
THE STATUE OF LIBERTY!
DO YOU REMEMBER THE WORDS "THE PATH IS OPEN?"
YOU REMEMBER EAST OF EDEN, DON'T YOU?
"GOD DIDN'T SAY TO CAIN 'REPENT YOUR SINS.' HE SAID 'YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.'"
CIPHER

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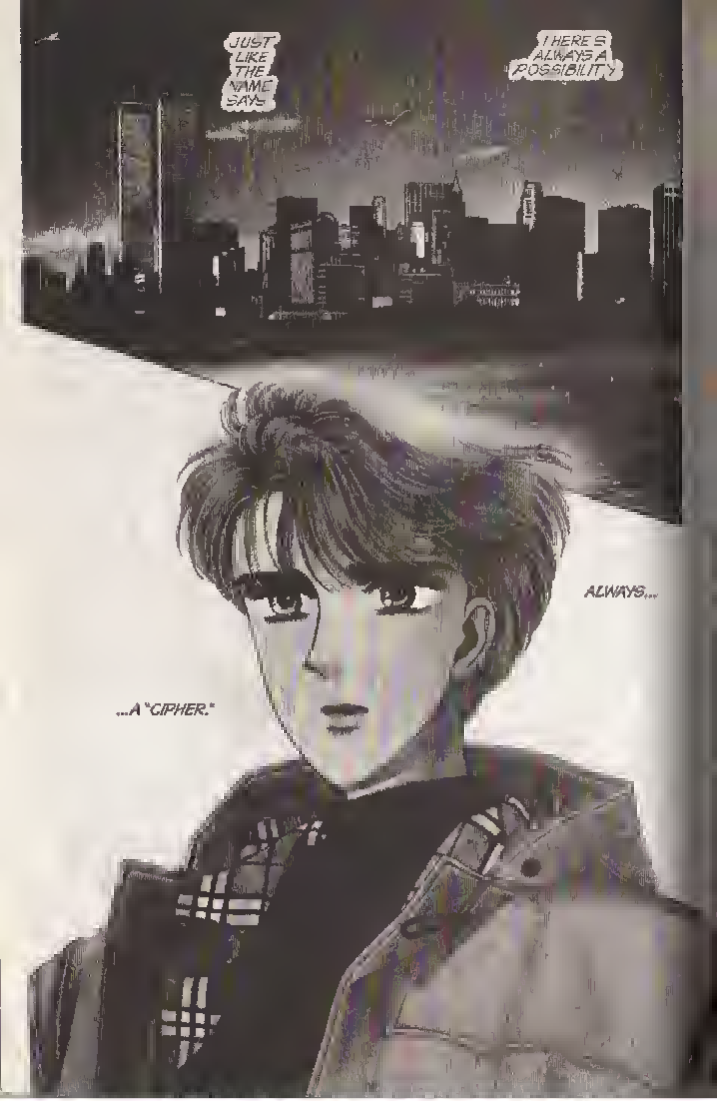

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YEAH ..YOU, TOO.
YOU LOOK GOOD.
IT FEELS LIKE I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR TEN YEARS!
OH!
WELL, OF COURSE.
I PROMISED HER I'D GO MEET HER.
CAN I DO IT AFTER I COME BACK?
NICE TREE YOU GOT HERE.
WILL YOU HELP ME DECORATE IT?
THIS YEAR I WANT THE BEST.
EH?
"MOM"
SLAM
NEXT TIME, I'LL INTRODUCE HER TO YOU, MOM.
OKAY, I'M OFF.

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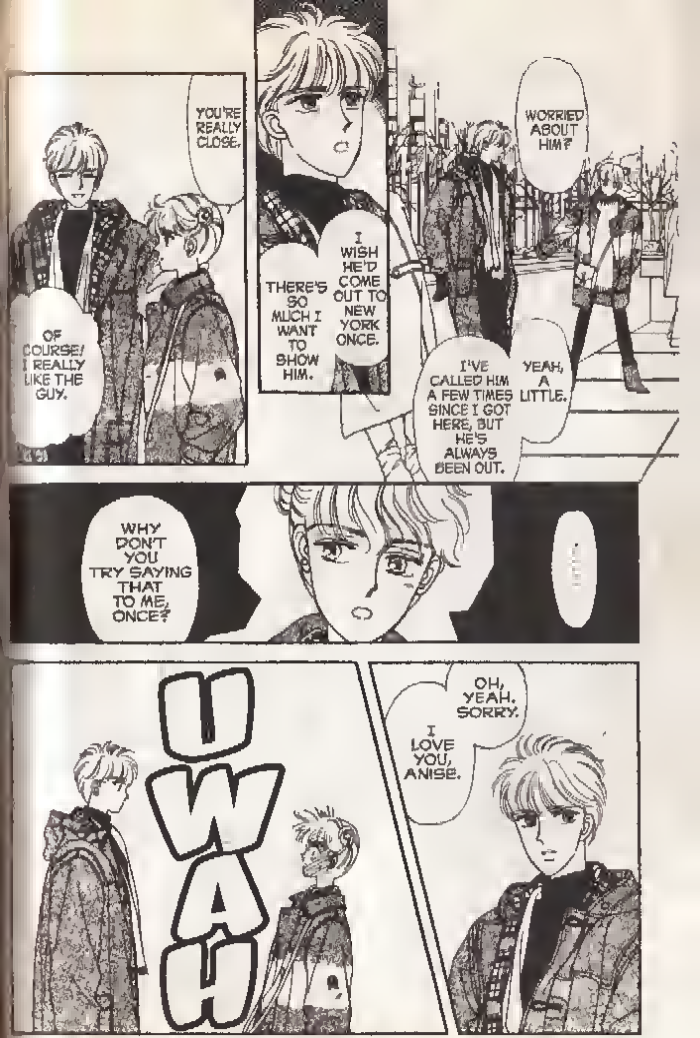
YOU'RE REALLY CLOSE.
OF COURSE! I REALLY LIKE THE GUY.
THERE'S SO MUCH I WANT TO SHOW HIM.
I WISH HE'D COME OUT TO NEW YORK ONCE.
WORRIED ABOUT HIM?
YEAH, A LITTLE.
I'VE CALLED HIM A FEW TIMES SINCE I GOT HERE, BUT HE'S ALWAYS BEEN OUT.
WHY DON'T YOU TRY SAYING THAT TO ME, ONCE?
IWAH
OH, YEAH. SORRY.
I LOVE YOU, ANISE.

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YOU SAID IT TO SIVA, THOUGH.
THINK SO?
IT'S NOT EASY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO SOMEONE'S FACE
YOU'RE STRANGE. DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE.
IS IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU, CIPHER?
THAT'S DIFFERENT. IT WASN'T FROM THE HEART.
IT FELT LIKE JAKE WAS ASKING, "SAY IT TO ME."
SMIRK
COME ON. LET'S GO BUY SOME DECORATIONS.
WELL THEN
YOU DON'T LIKE HIM?

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THIS ORNAMENT IS CUTE.
YEAH, REALLY IS THERE A PLACE WE CAN BUY A BUNCH OF THEM TOGETHER?
CIPHER!
YOU'VE GOT THAT "DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT" FACE
CIPHER...
YOU REALLY ARE DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE.
the world's largest store
Macy's

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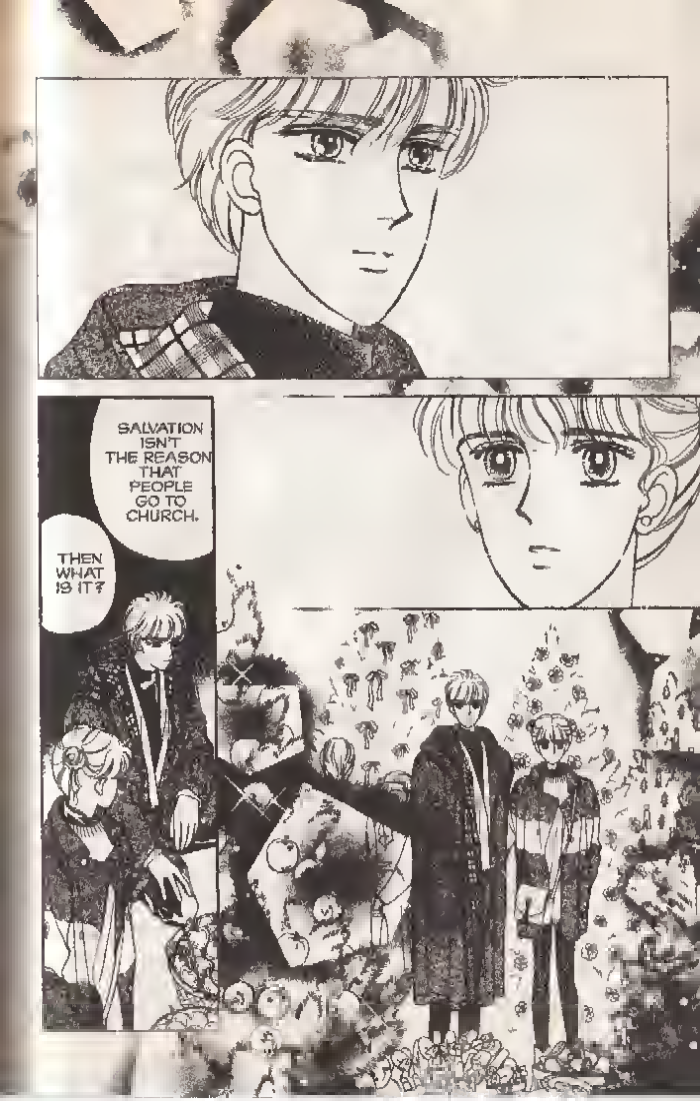

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WHAT?
SCRUB SCRUB
OUCH!
THIS SPOT
IT'S TO GIVE THANKS.
SO MUCH SO, IT'S ALMOST SCARY
CIPHER HAS GROWN SO CALM AND QUIET.
NOW THIS SPOT HURTS.
IF I'M GONNA STICK WITH LEVINE, GIVE ME MORE BANDAGES!
GIVE ME
UH... YEAH, I'D LOVE TO!
ANISE, WANT TO COME TO MY PLACE NEXT TIME?
NO NEED TO MEDDLE

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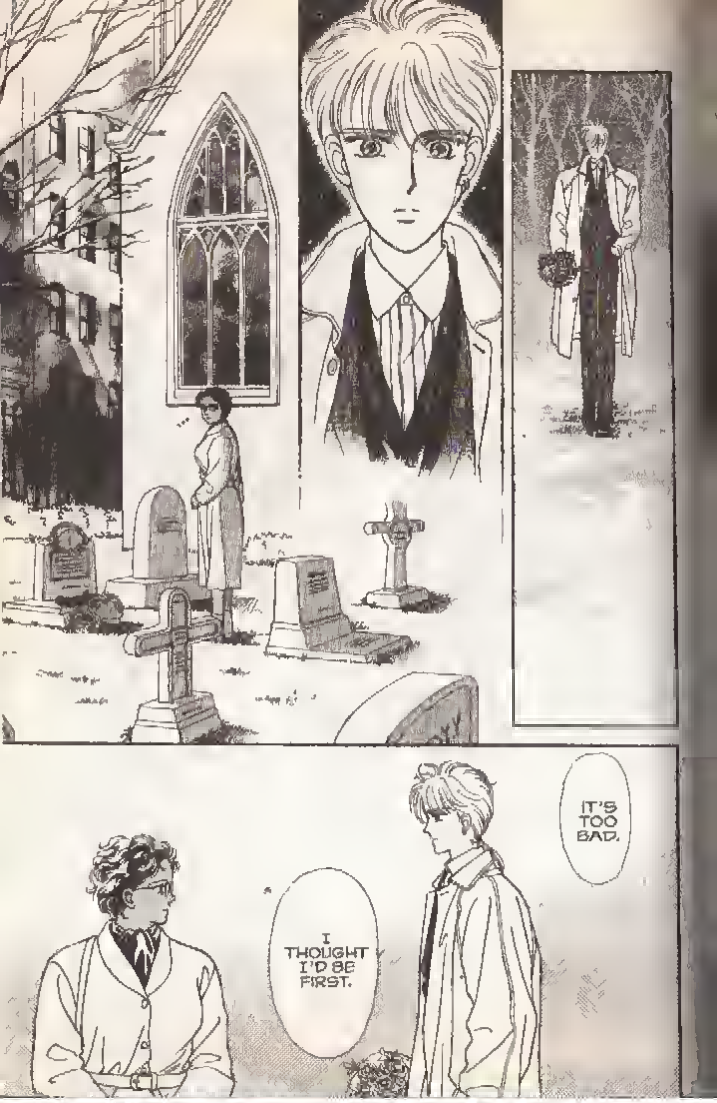

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↑ THE MOST POPULAR MOVIE OF THE TIME

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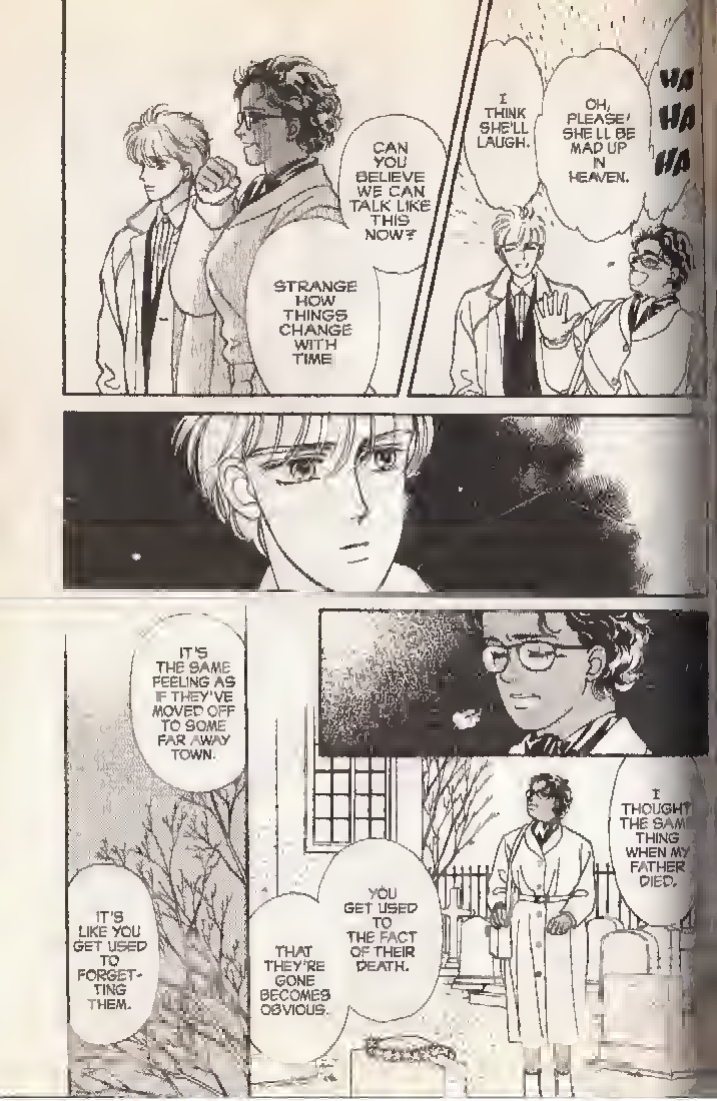
CAN YOU BELIEVE WE CAN TALK LIKE THIS NOW?
STRANGE HOW THINGS CHANGE WITH TIME
I THINK SHE'LL LAUGH.
OH, PLEASE! SHE'LL BE MAD UP IN HEAVEN.
HA HA HA
IT'S THE SAME FEELING AS IF THEY'VE MOVED OFF TO SOME FAR AWAY TOWN.
IT'S LIKE YOU GET USED TO FORGET-TING THEM.
THAT THEY'RE GONE BECOMES OBVIOUS.
YOU GET USED TO THE FACT OF THEIR DEATH.
I THOUGHT THE SAME THING WHEN MY FATHER DIED.

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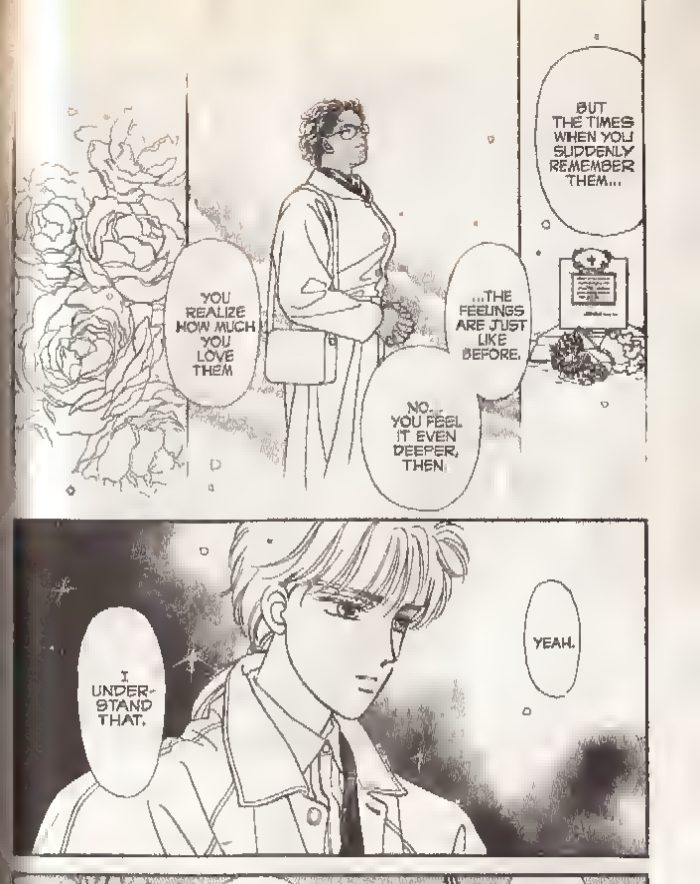
BUT THE TIMES WHEN YOU SUDDENLY REMEMBER THEM...
...THE FEELINGS ARE JUST LIKE BEFORE.
NO... YOU FEEL IT EVEN DEEPER, THEN.
YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH YOU LOVE THEM
YEAH.
I UNDER-STAND THAT.
EVEN IF THE NATURE OF IT CHANGES ...
LOVE IS SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T GO AWAY

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huh?
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
ALTHOUGH THAT'S COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO HAD AN AFFAIR.
MY MOTHER SAID THAT LOVE IS SOMETHING THAT INCREASES
YES, I THINK SO.
WAS SAYING SOMETHING THAT BRAZEN...
...HER WAY OF SAYING SHE WASN'T BETRAYING FATHER?
I HAVEN'T SUNG SINCE SHE DIED.
BUT TODAY, I FINALLY FEEL LIKE I CAN SING.
MAYBE ..
...I SHOULD SING FOR HER.

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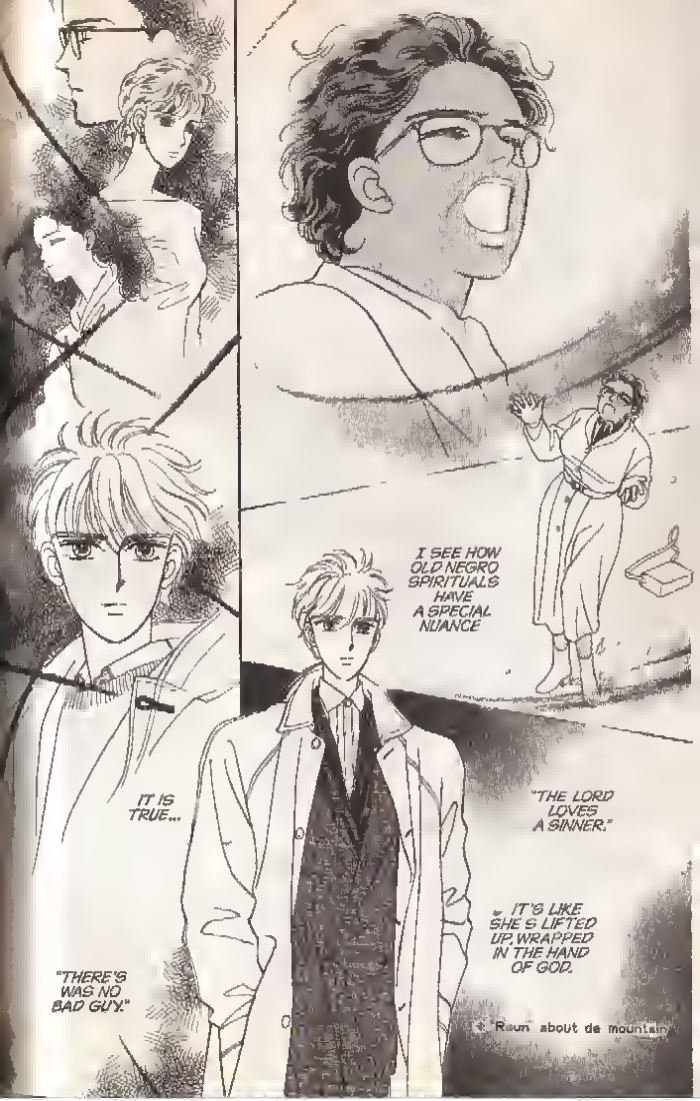
I SEE HOW OLD NEGRO SPIRITUALS HAVE A SPECIAL NUANCE
IT IS TRUE...
"THERE'S WAS NO BAD GUY."
"THE LORD LOVES A SINNER."
IT'S LIKE SHE'S LIFTED UP, WRAPPED IN THE HAND OF GOD.
'Roun' about de mountain

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LOTS OF CRIME IN THIS TOWN.
THIS IS A BAD TOWN!
NOW WE'LL SHOW YOU THE BEST PLACES IN AMERICA TO SPEND CHRISTMAS.
THIS IS OHIO, WHERE...
THIS IS A GOOD TOWN.
NO CRIME THERE.
WHAT'S YOUR DAD DO, LEVINE?
NO WONDER.
HE'S A MEDICAL EXAMINER

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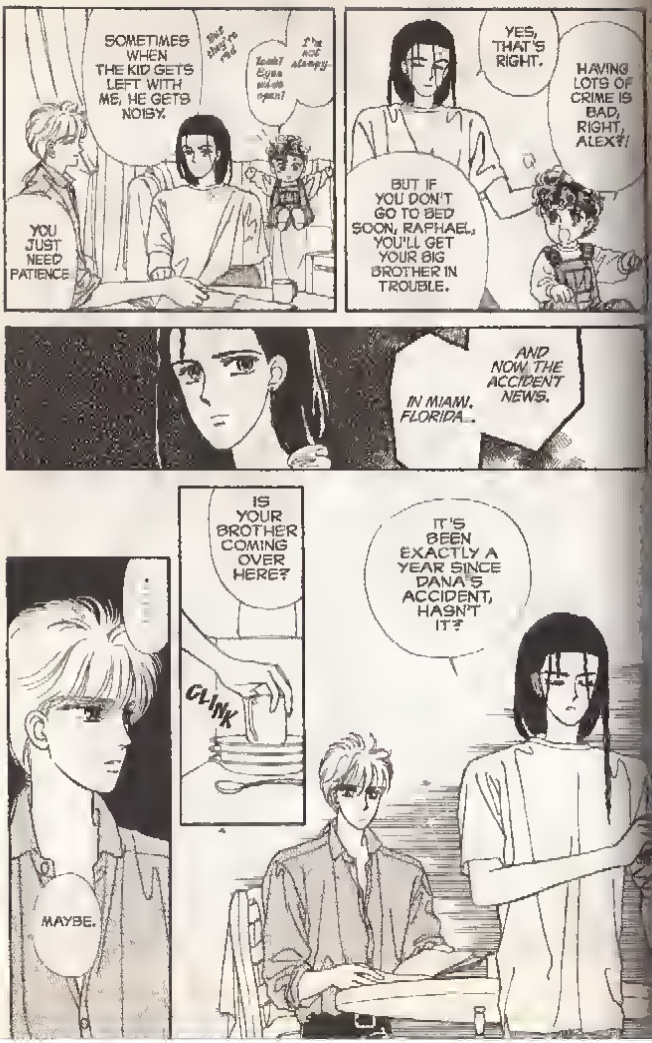
SOMETIMES WHEN THE KID GETS LEFT WITH ME, HE GETS NOISY.
But they're fun!
I'm not allergic!
Look! Cyan mixin again!
YOU JUST NEED PATIENCE
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
HAVING LOTS OF CRIME IS BAD, RIGHT, ALEX?!
BUT IF YOU DON'T GO TO BED SOON, RAPHAEL, YOU'LL GET YOUR BIG BROTHER IN TROUBLE.
AND NOW THE ACCIDENT NEWS.
IN MIAMI, FLORIDA...
IS YOUR BROTHER COMING OVER HERE?
CLINK
IT'S BEEN EXACTLY A YEAR SINCE DANA'S ACCIDENT, HASN'T IT?
MAYBE.

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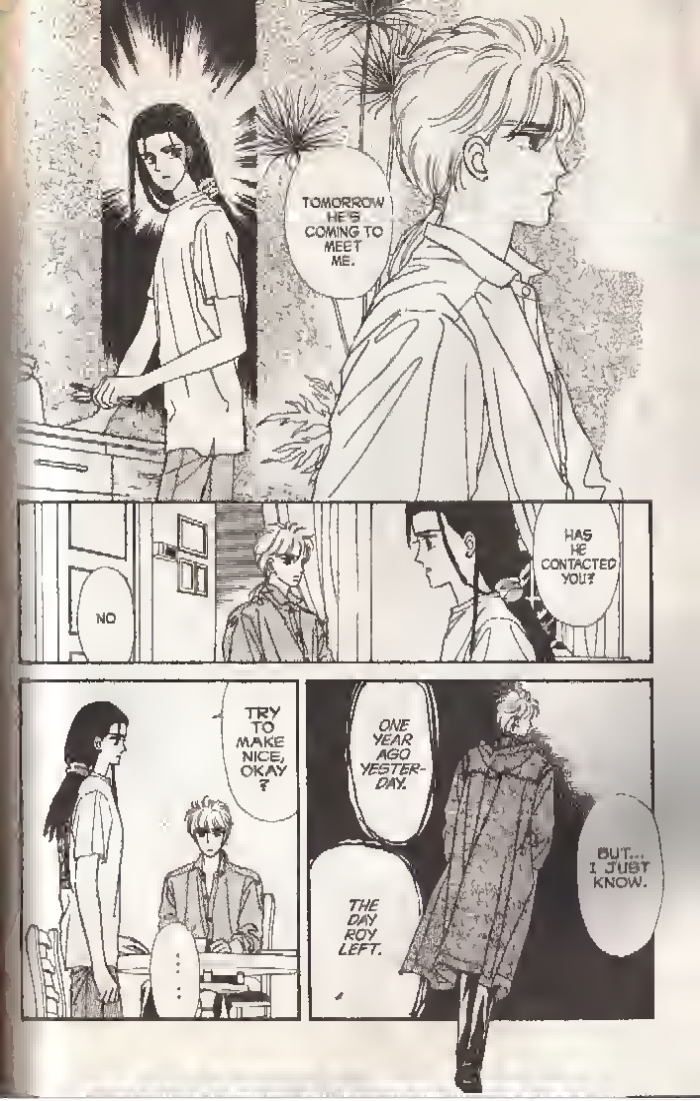
TOMORROW HE'S COMING TO MEET ME.
HAS HE CONTACTED YOU?
NO
TRY TO MAKE NICE, OKAY?
ONE YEAR AGO YESTERDAY.
THE DAY ROY LEFT.
BUT... I JUST KNOW.

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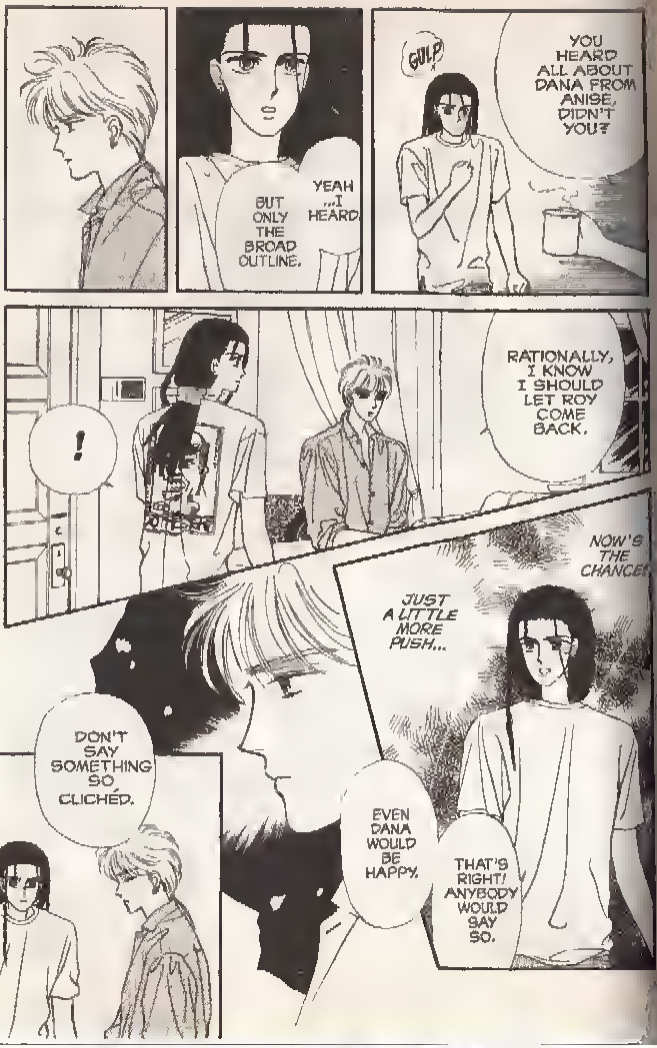
GUU?
YOU HEARD ALL ABOUT DANA FROM ANISE, DIDN'T YOU?
YEAH ...I HEARD.
BUT ONLY THE BROAD OUTLINE.
!
RATIONALLY, I KNOW I SHOULD LET ROY COME BACK.
NOW'S THE CHANCE!
JUST A LITTLE MORE PUSH...
DON'T SAY SOMETHING SO CLICHÉD.
EVEN DANA WOULD BE HAPPY.
THAT'S RIGHT! ANYBODY WOULD SAY SO.

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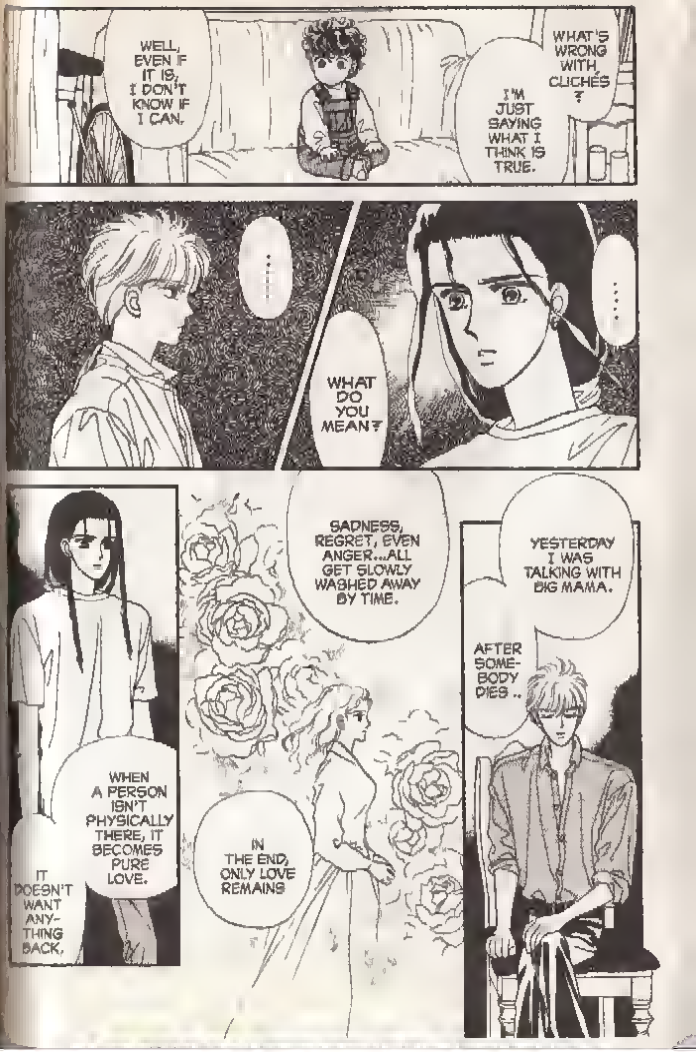
WELL, EVEN IF IT IS, I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH CLICHÉS ?
I'M JUST SAYING WHAT I THINK IS TRUE.
.....
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
.....
WHEN A PERSON ISN'T PHYSICALLY THERE, IT BECOMES PURE LOVE.
IT DOESN'T WANT ANY-THING BACK.
SADNESS, REGRET, EVEN ANGER...ALL GET SLOWLY WASHED AWAY BY TIME.
IN THE END, ONLY LOVE REMAINS
YESTERDAY I WAS TALKING WITH BIG MAMA.
AFTER SOME-BODY DIES ..

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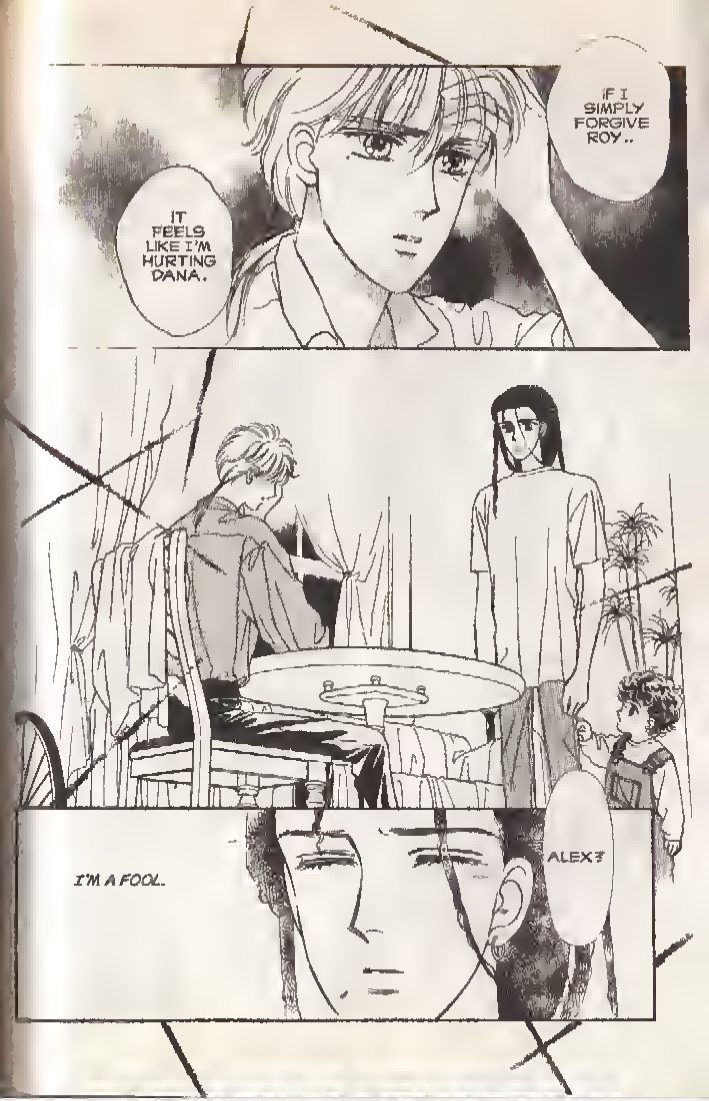

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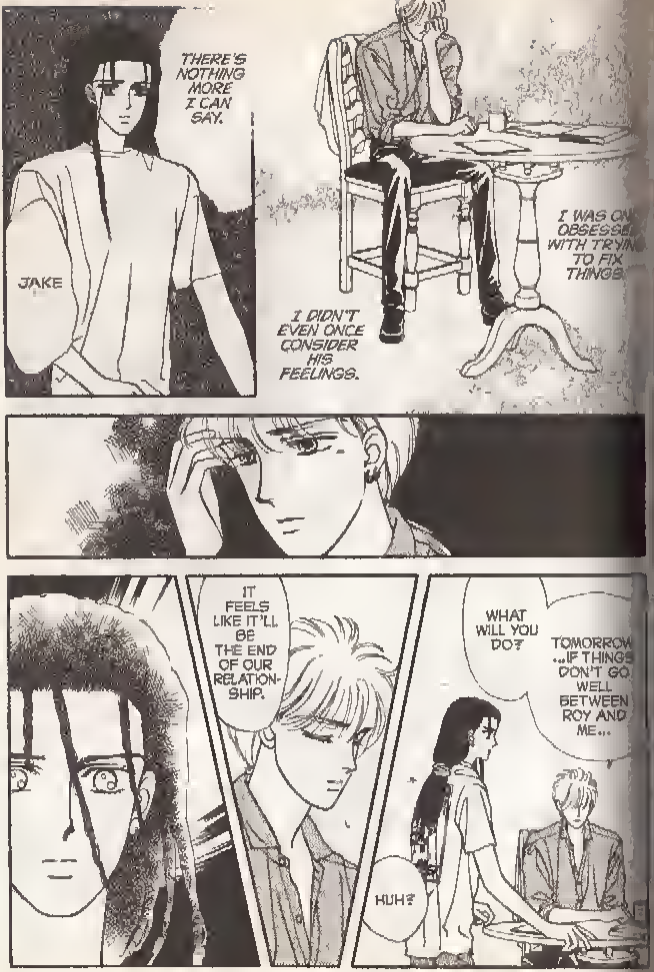
THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN SAY.
JAKE
I DIDN'T EVEN ONCE CONSIDER HIS FEELINGS.
I WAS ONLY OBSESSED WITH TRYING TO FIX THINGS.
IT FEELS LIKE IT'LL BE THE END OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
TOMORROW ...IF THINGS DON'T GO WELL BETWEEN ROY AND ME...
HUH?

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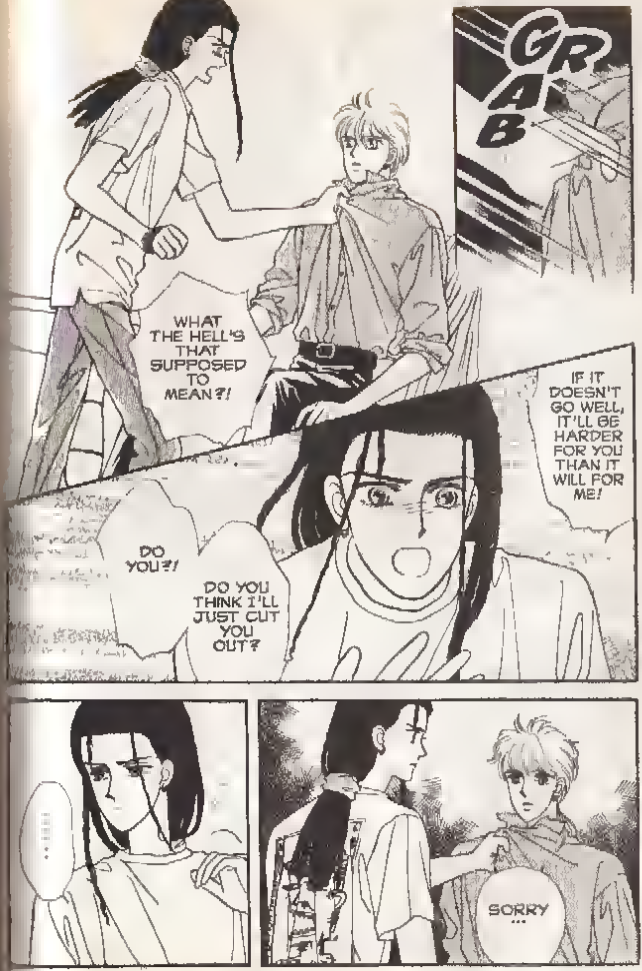
GRAB
WHAT THE HELL'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
IF IT DOESN'T GO WELL, IT'LL BE HARDER FOR YOU THAN IT WILL FOR ME!
DO YOU?!
DO YOU THINK I'LL JUST CUT YOU OUT?
SORRY...

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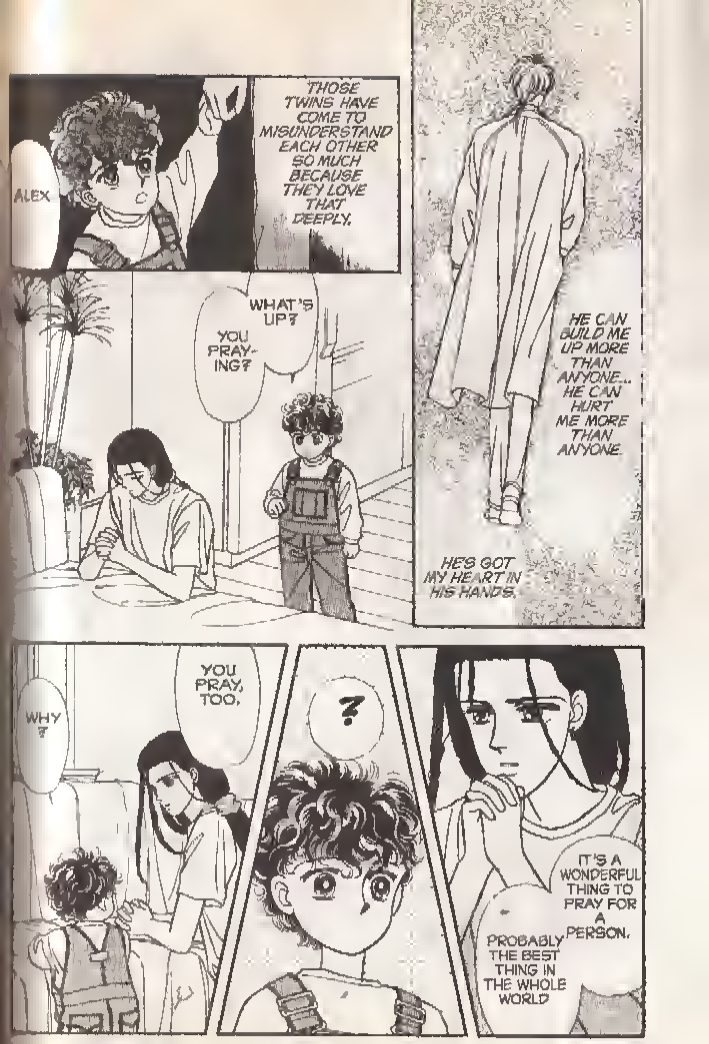
ALEX
THOSE TWINS HAVE COME TO MISUNDERSTAND EACH OTHER SO MUCH BECAUSE THEY LOVE THAT DEEPLY.
WHAT'S UP?
YOU PRAYING?
HE CAN BUILD ME UP MORE THAN ANYONE... HE CAN HURT ME MORE THAN ANYONE.
HE'S GOT MY HEART IN HIS HANDS.
WHY?
YOU PRAY, TOO.
?
IT'S A WONDERFUL THING TO PRAY FOR A PERSON.
PROBABLY THE BEST THING IN THE WHOLE WORLD

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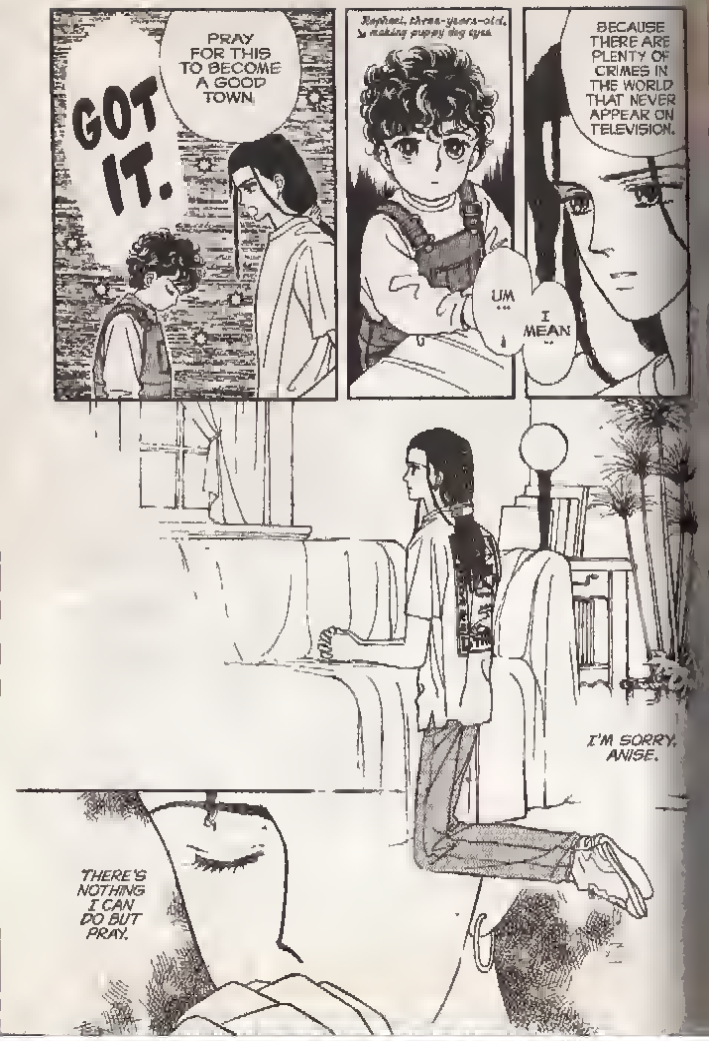
GOT IT.
PRAY FOR THIS TO BECOME A GOOD TOWN.
Raphael, three-years-old, is making puppy dog eyes
UM... I MEAN...
BECAUSE THERE ARE PLENTY OF CRIMES IN THE WORLD THAT NEVER APPEAR ON TELEVISION.
I'M SORRY, ANISE.
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT PRAY.

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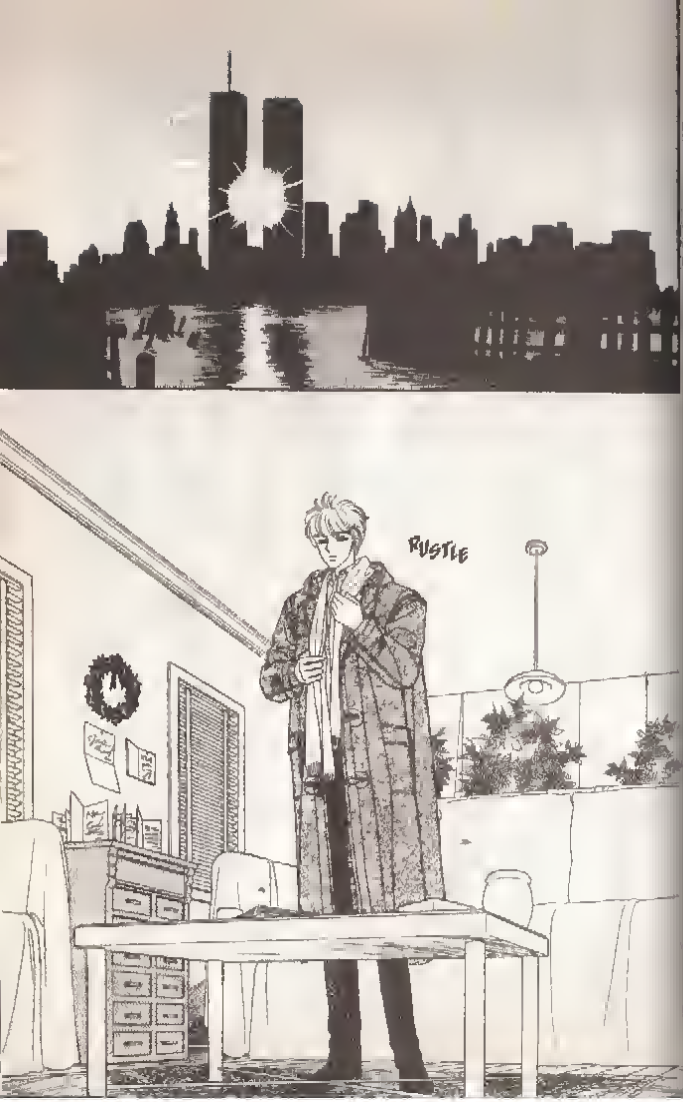

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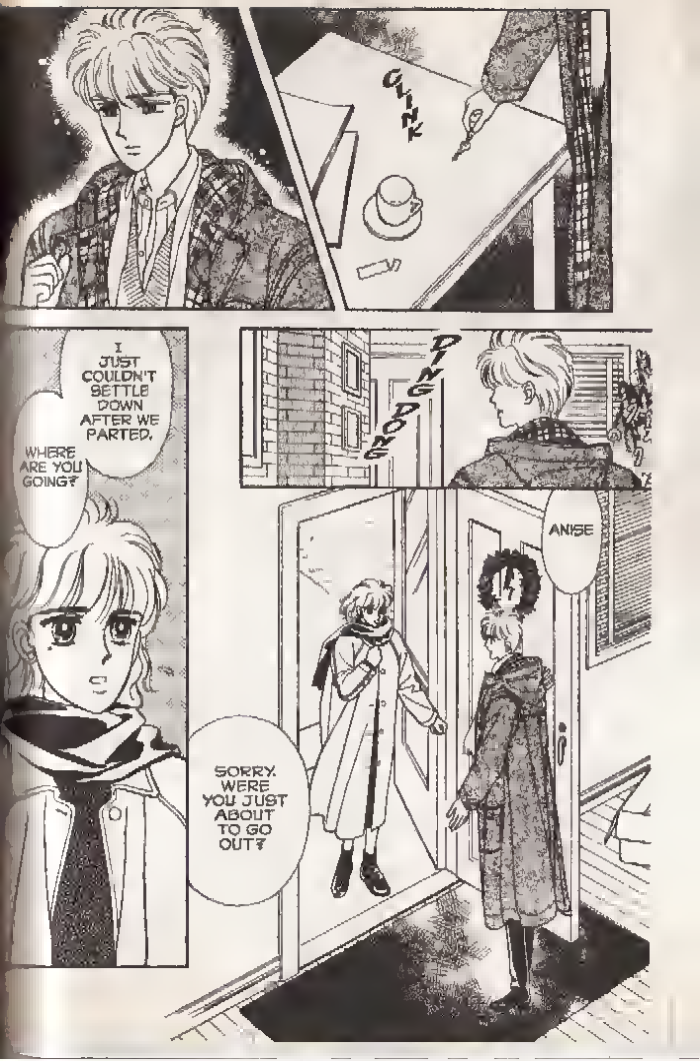

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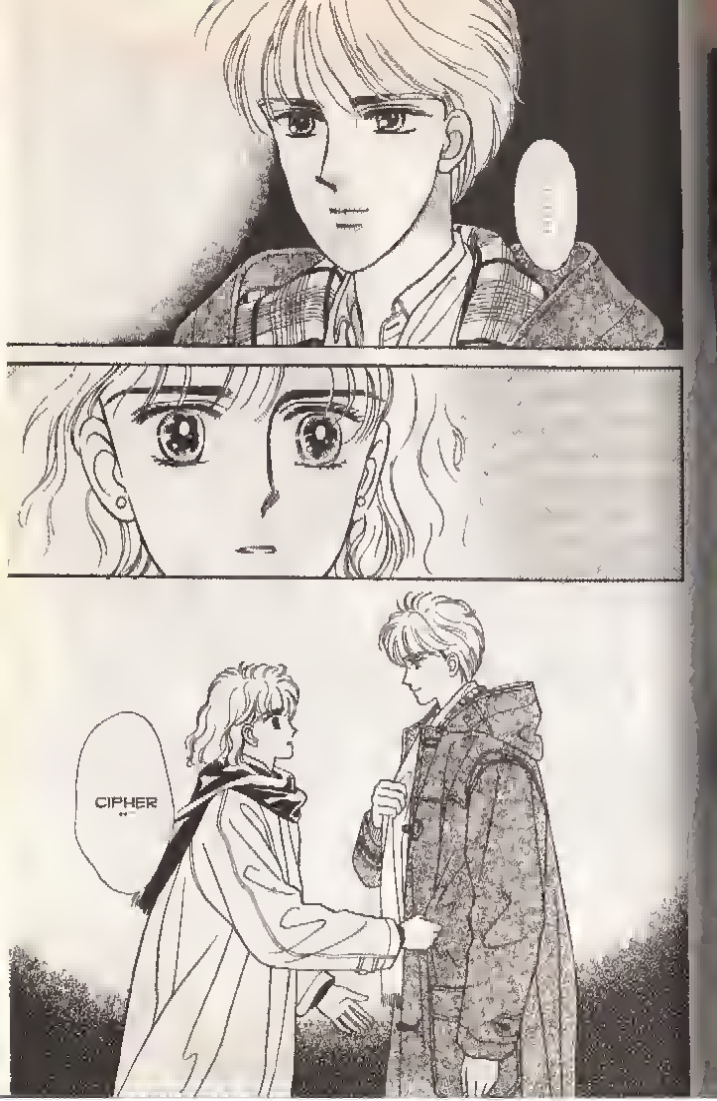

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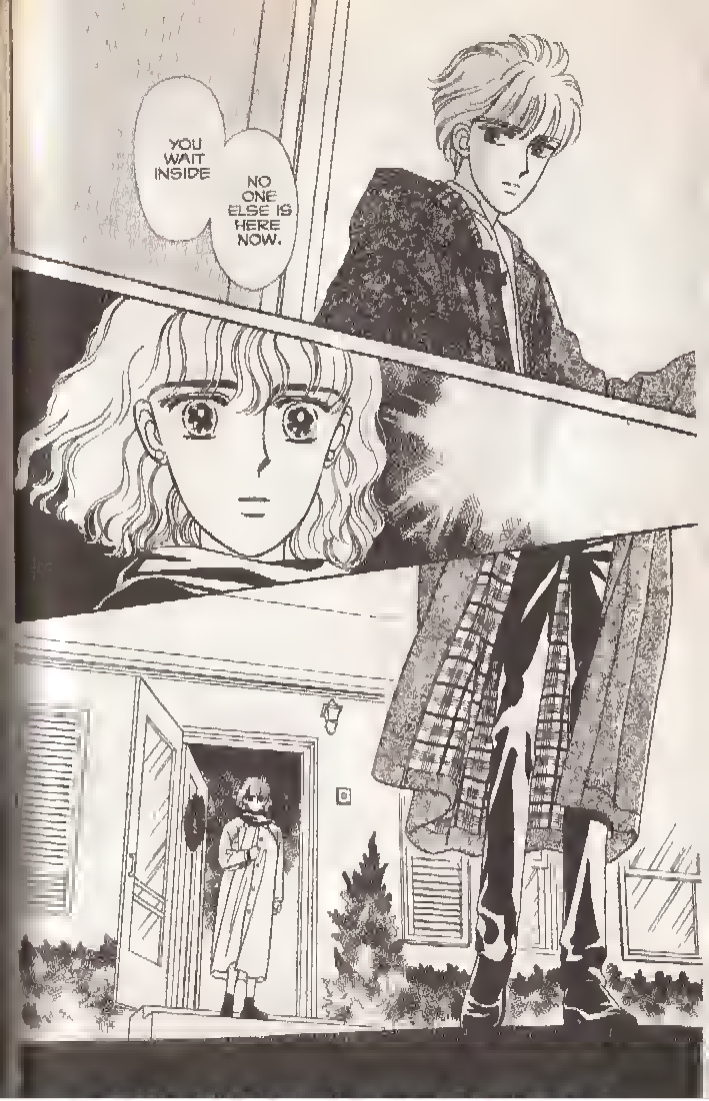

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I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF.
WHEN I FACE ROY...
WHEN I FACE ROY IN THIS ROOM, WHAT WILL I DO?
OR WILL I WANT TO EMBRACE HIM?
WILL I WANT TO KILL HIM?

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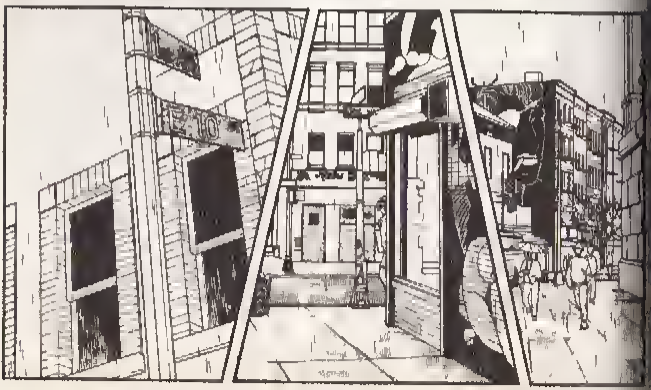

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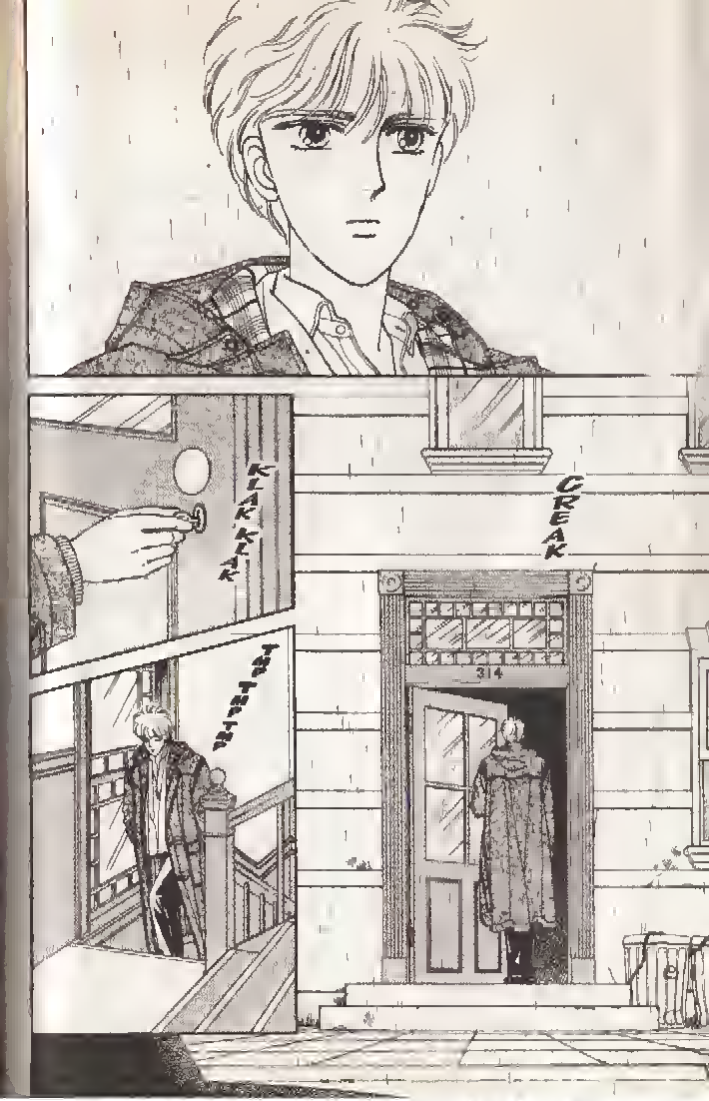

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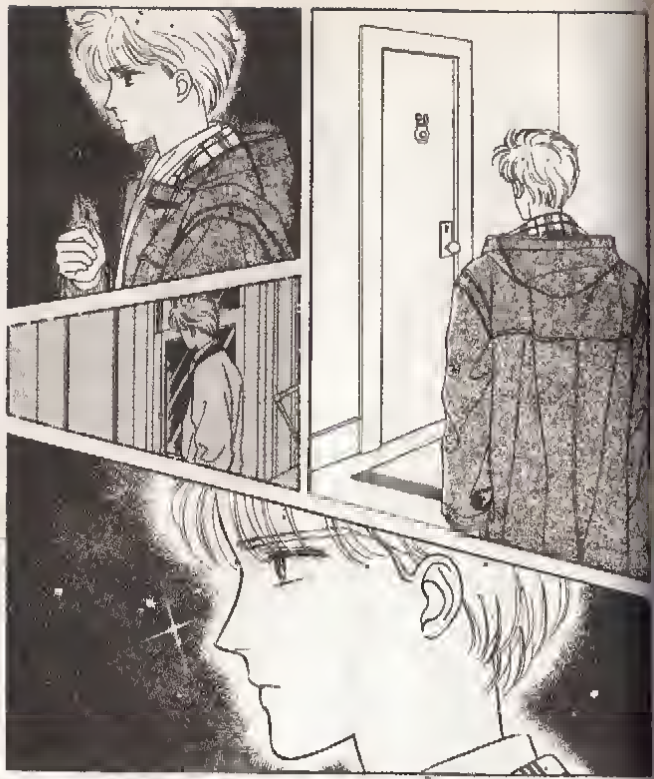

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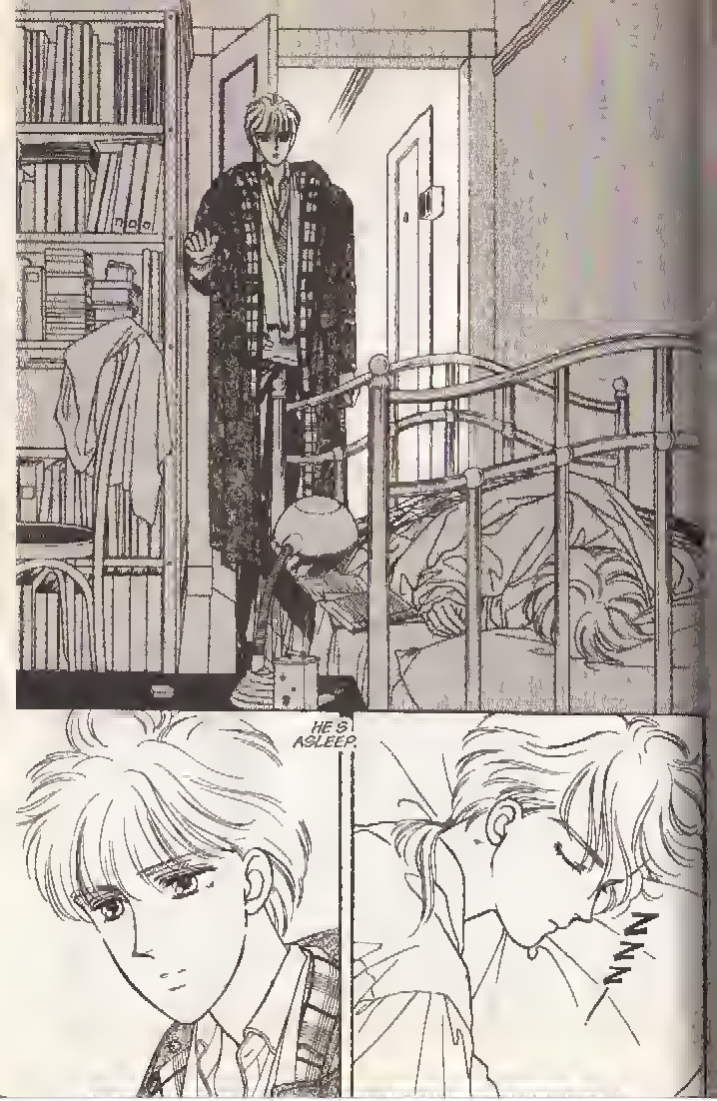

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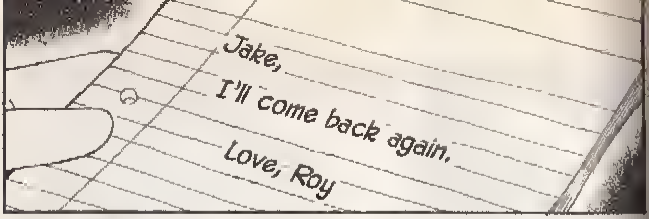

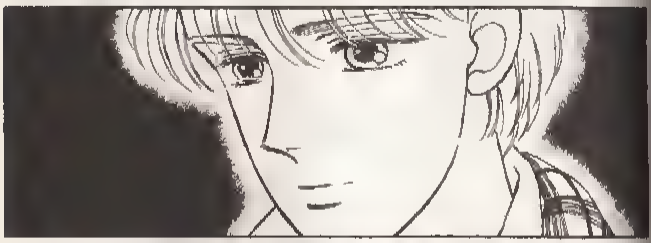

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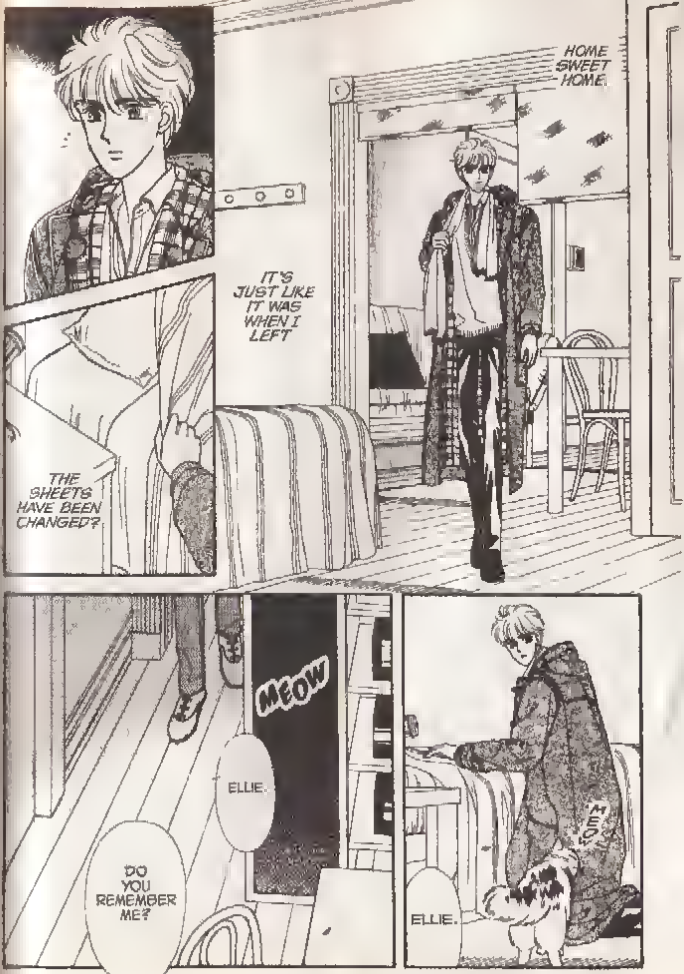

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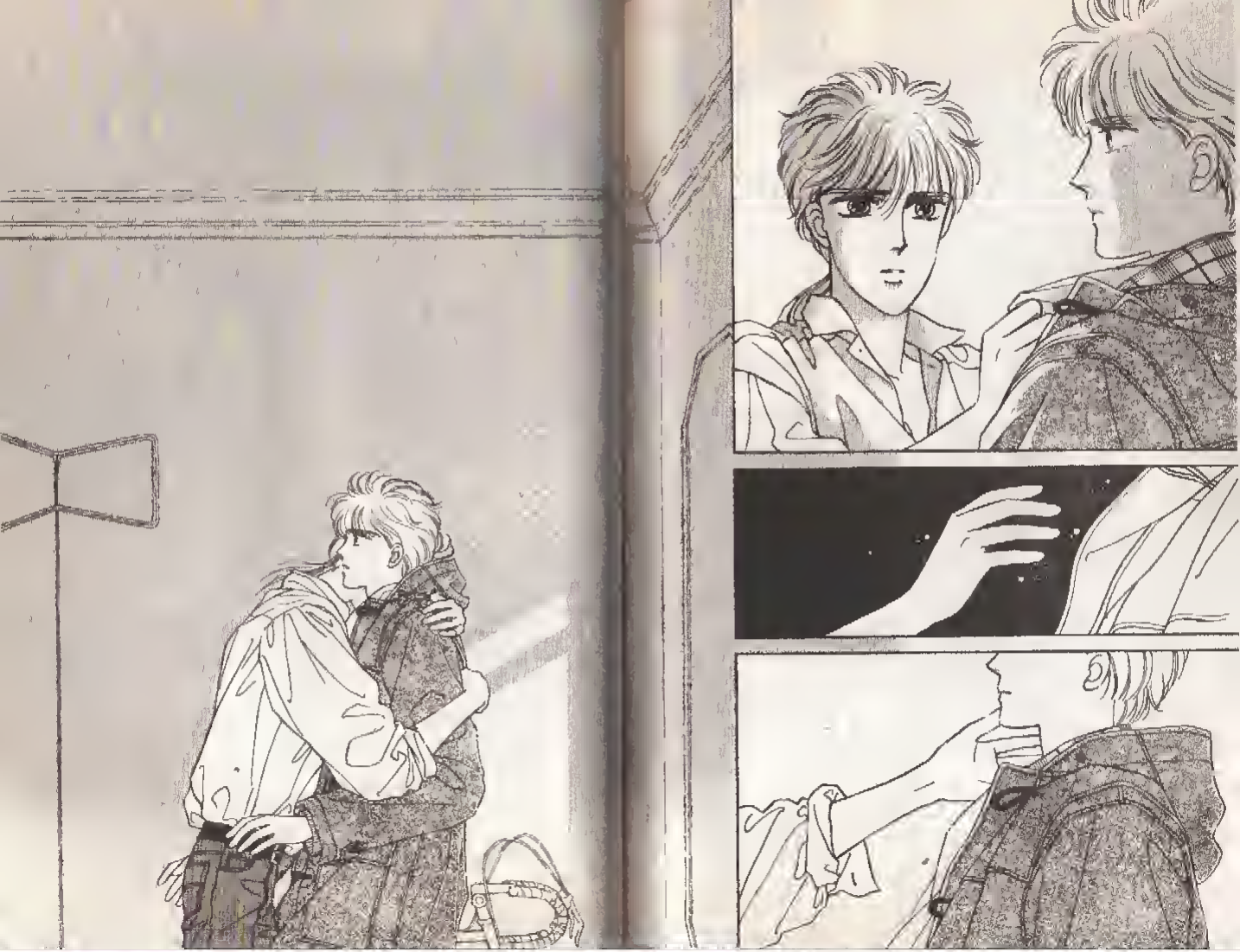

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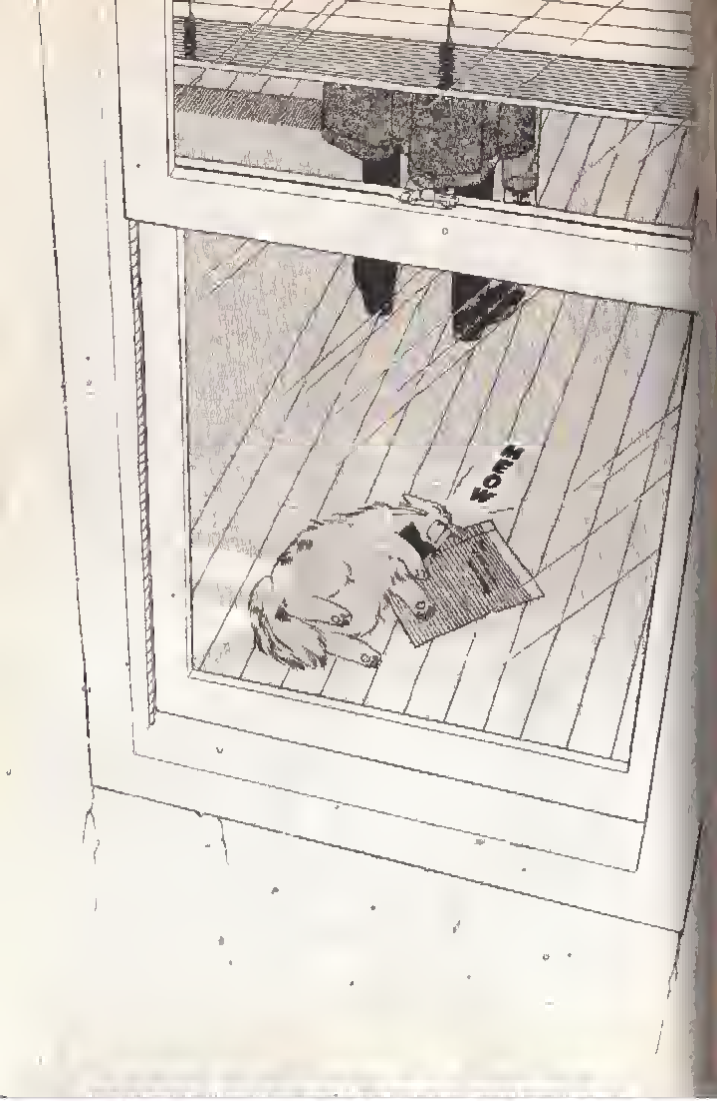

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WOW!
KNOCK IT OFF, HAL.
KEEP STARING UP WITH YOUR MOUTH OPEN, AND YOU'RE GONNA FALL OVER.
AH...
THAT'S RIGHT... NEW YORK IS A DANGEROUS TOWN.
Here in New Jersey, accustomed to New York
WELL, IT'S NOT EXACTLY DANGEROUS.

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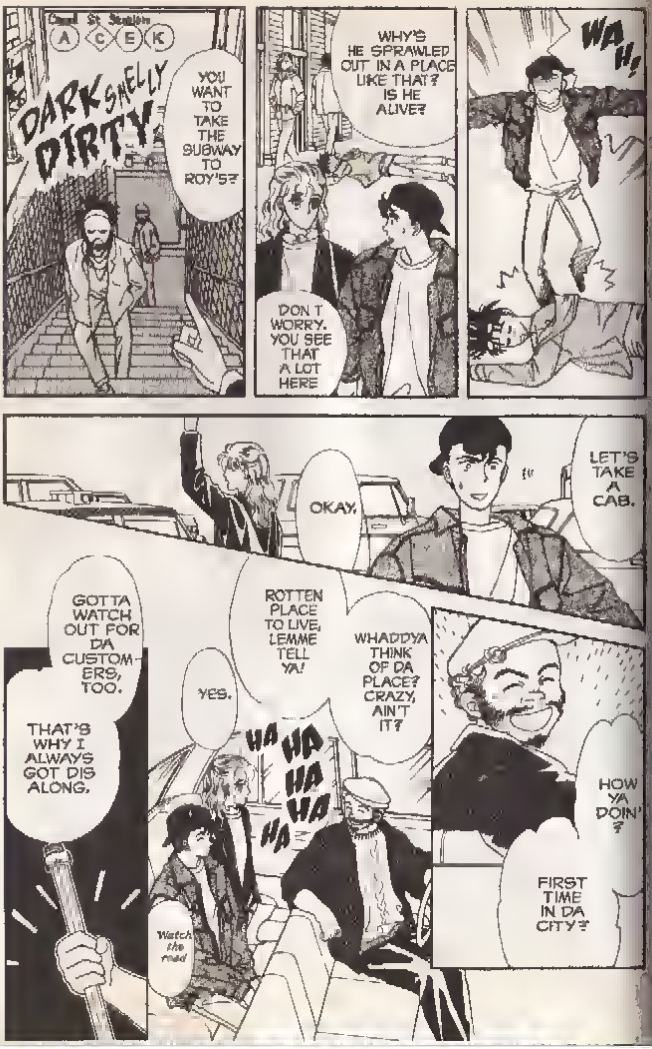
Canal St. Station
A C E K
DARK SMELLY DIRTY
YOU WANT TO TAKE THE SUBWAY TO ROY'S?
WHY'S HE SPRAWLED OUT IN A PLACE LIKE THAT? IS HE ALIVE?
DON'T WORRY. YOU SEE THAT A LOT HERE
WA H!
LET'S TAKE A CAB.
OKAY.
HOW YA DOIN'?
FIRST TIME IN DA CITY?
WHADDYA THINK OF DA PLACE? CRAZY, AIN'T IT?
ROTTEN PLACE TO LIVE, LEMME TELL YA!
YES.
HA HA HA HA
GOTTA WATCH OUT FOR DA CUSTOMERS, TOO.
THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS GOT DIS ALONG.
Watch the road!

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SPOOKY ATMOSPHERE
AH!
HA HA HA HA HA
Y-YOU CAN LET US OFF HERE
OKAY BE CAREFUL.
.....
ROY'S APARTMENT ITSELF SEEMS TO BE IN KIND OF AN UNSAFE NEIGHBORHOOD.
IT FEELS KINDA DANGEROUS.
WELL. ACTUALLY...

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S-SOMEBODY'S LOOKING AT US..
They all look like skeletons
TAN TAN TAN TAN
I COULD'VE PREPARED MYSELF!
TELLING YOU WOULDN'T CHANGE ANY-THING.
YOU SHOULDA TOLD ME THAT FROM THE START!
IT'S THAT GUY.
HE WAS IN THE MAGAZINE WITH ROY'S BROTHER.
HEY...
212

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AREN'T YOU...
'CUSE ME. I'VE GOT TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.
HEY!
OF COURSE I'M SURE! THAT'S THE GUY!
HUH? ARE YOU SURE IT'S HIM?
LOOM
UH... OH...
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE, DON'T INTIMIDATE ME, ASSWIPE!
BACK OFF!
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ASK?

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THIS IS SARAH.
I KNEW IT! COOL!
HI.
I KNOW ALL ABOUT JAKE.
NICE TO MEET YOU I'M LEVINE.
OH, I GET IT. ROY'S ROOM-MATE!
I SAW THAT MAGAZINE SPREAD, AND THOUGHT MAYBE IT WAS YOU.
OH, I SEE.
I was celebrating myself
Hmmm
Guess they know each other
SO HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS A FRIEND OF JAKE'S?
WOW... YOU REALLY ARE PRETTY.
OH.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
Is this what's coming to me?
I DON'T FEEL THE LEAST BIT MAD.
I EVEN THANKED HIM.

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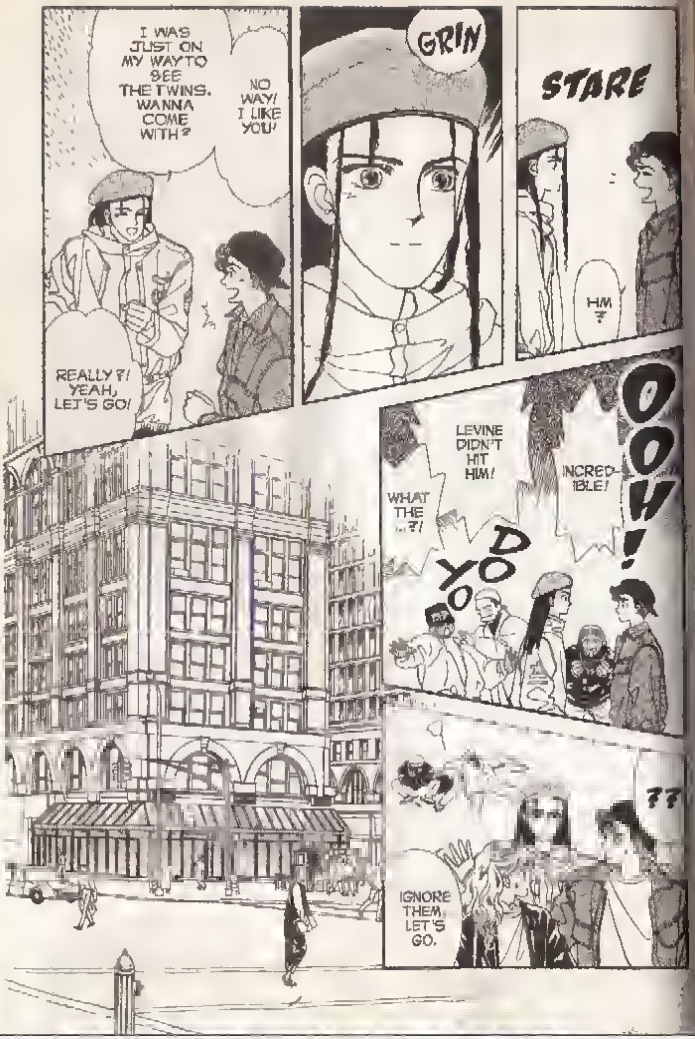

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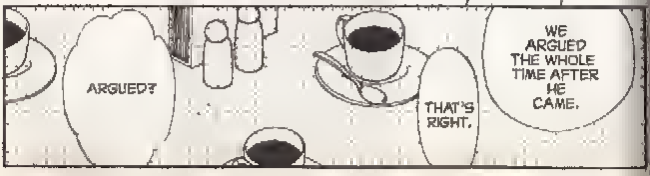

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YOU TOO!
THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID SO AT THE TIME.
WHAT A CHILDISH ARGUMENT.
I'M STILL MAD THAT ONLY ROY WAS ASKED TO CLIMB THE MOUNTAIN WITH DAD.
HEY, I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE MAD
I WAS SHOCKED THAT JAKE WAS TOLD TO STAY WITH MOM.
HE'S THE ONE WHO'S CHANGED
Uh... Er...
JAKE HAS CHANGED. WAS HE LIKE THIS BEFORE?
?
OH, HE'S HERE.
KNOCK KNOCK
IT'S LEVINE.

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THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?
UH?!
GRIN
THANKS! I'M HAPPY TO SEE YOU, HAL!
YOU CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO SEE ME!
JERKWAD! I NEVER SAID THAT!
HI.
Like I said on on the Statue of Liberty. And Sarah was leaving out.
HI, SARAH!
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU THIS IS JAKE.
NICE TO MEET YOU
THIS IS THE HAL I TOLD YOU ABOUT.
UH...
Can't deny it anymore
THAT'S RIGHT, ISN'T IT, ROY?
ALL THE WAY FROM L.A.? REALLY?
SO YOU CAME HERE TO SEE ROY?

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ME TOO.
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN THEM TOGETHER
SO HOW COME YOU'RE WITH THEM?
JUST RAN ACROSS HIM IN THE STREET.
THEY DON'T LOOK ALIKE
THE FACES LOOK THE SAME.
BUT I CAN QUICKLY TELL THEM APART. THE FEELING IS DIFFERENT.
HM...
FOR TWINS, THEY DON'T LOOK MUCH ALIKE.
EH.
DO YOU THINK SO, TOO?
Even apart from the hair
WELL, YEAH. NO DOUBT.
.....

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I never been told "I like you."
GASP
WAAH
WHA--?! WHAT'S THAT, ALL OF A SUDDEN?
I REALLY LIKE YOU.
you're making me blush.
HUH? WHAT?
?
What about me? Say it to me!
I'M CHILDISH EVEN I KNOW IT.
BUT FROM NOW ON, THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH DOING MY CHILDHOOD ALL OVER AGAIN
SO YOU CAN FINALLY SAY IT.
YUP.
DID YOU JUST LAUGH?
HEH

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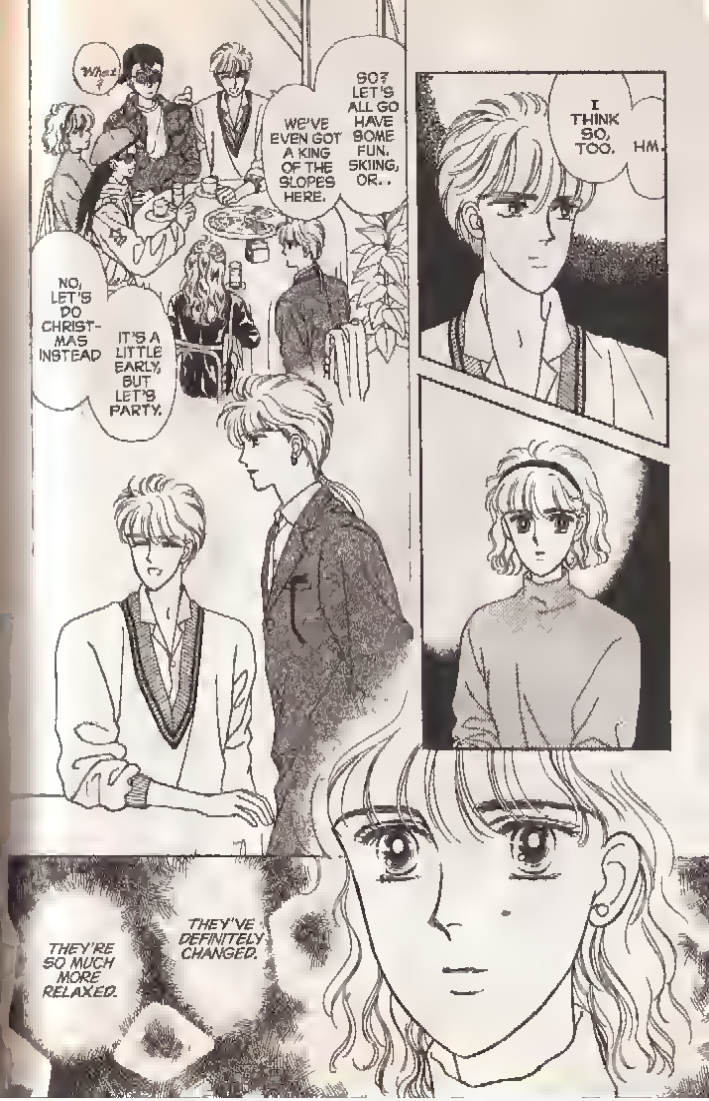
What?
SO? LET'S ALL GO HAVE SOME FUN. SKIING, OR..
WE'VE EVEN GOT A KING OF THE SLOPES HERE.
I THINK SO, TOO. HM.
NO, LET'S DO CHRIST-MAS INSTEAD
IT'S A LITTLE EARLY, BUT LET'S PARTY.
THEY'RE SO MUCH MORE RELAXED.
THEY'VE DEFINITELY CHANGED.

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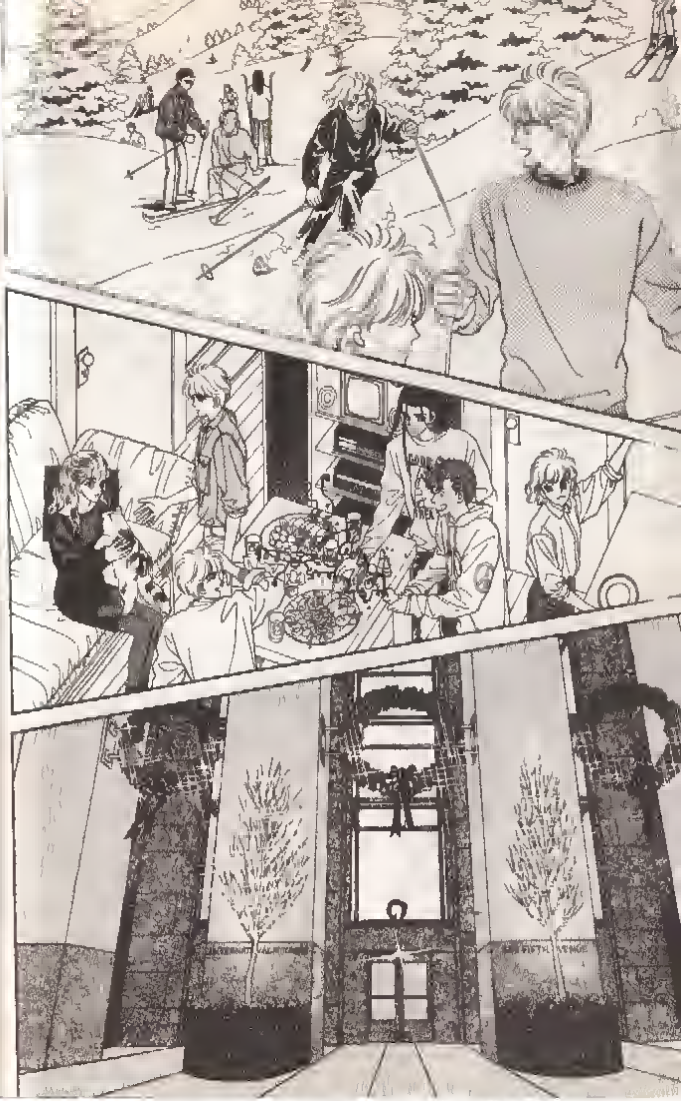

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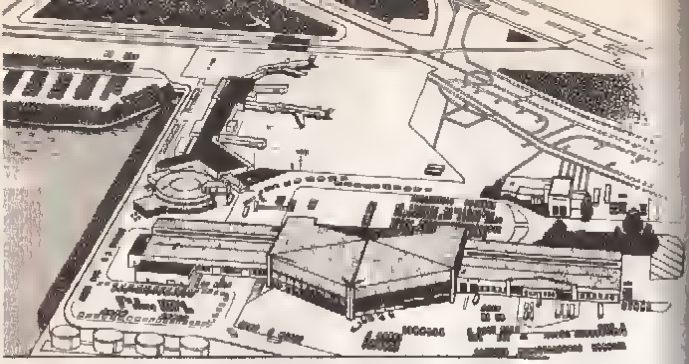

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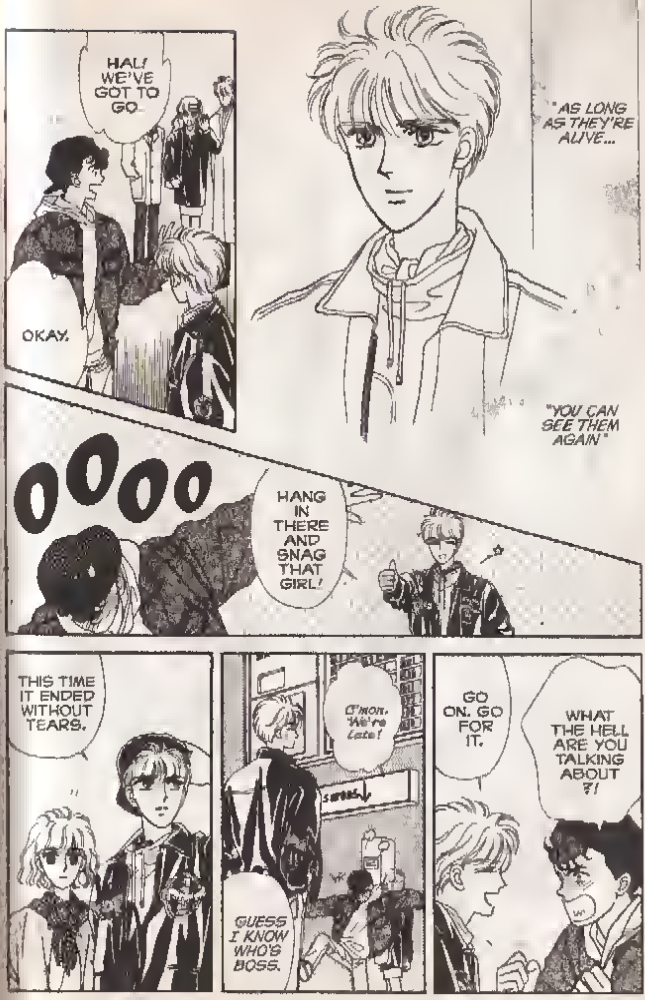
HA! WE'VE GOT TO GO.
OKAY.
"AS LONG AS THEY'RE ALIVE...
"YOU CAN SEE THEM AGAIN"
HANG IN THERE AND SNAG THAT GIRL!
THIS TIME IT ENDED WITHOUT TEARS.
C'mon. We're late!
GUESS I KNOW WHO'S BOSS.
GO ON. GO FOR IT.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

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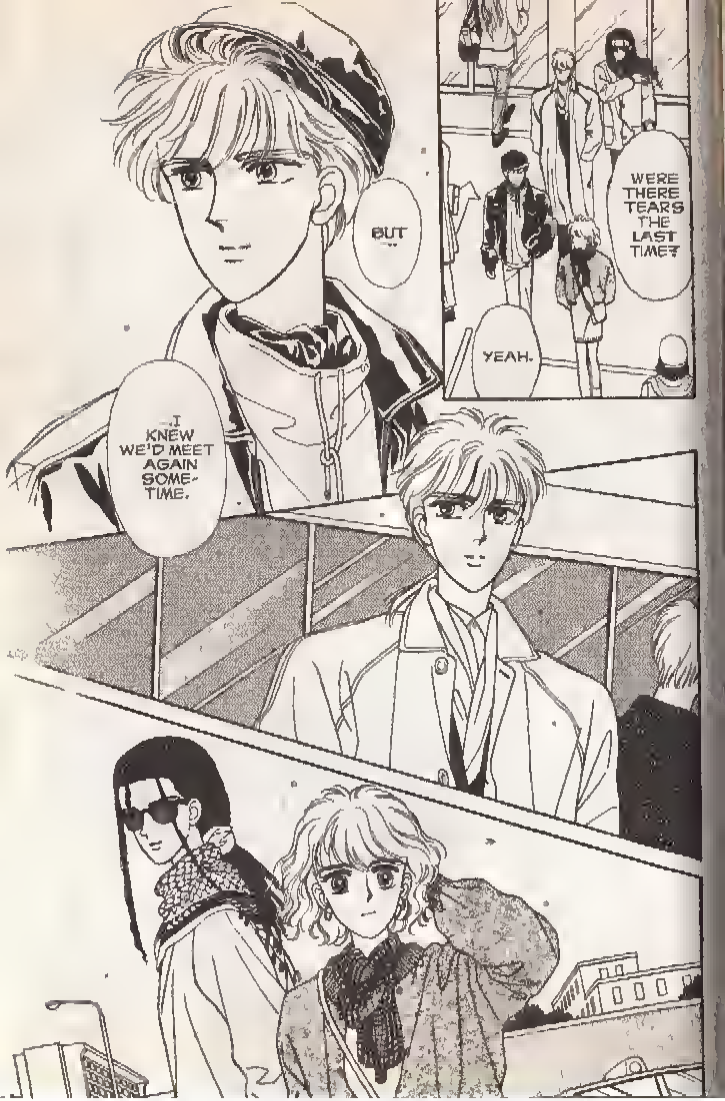

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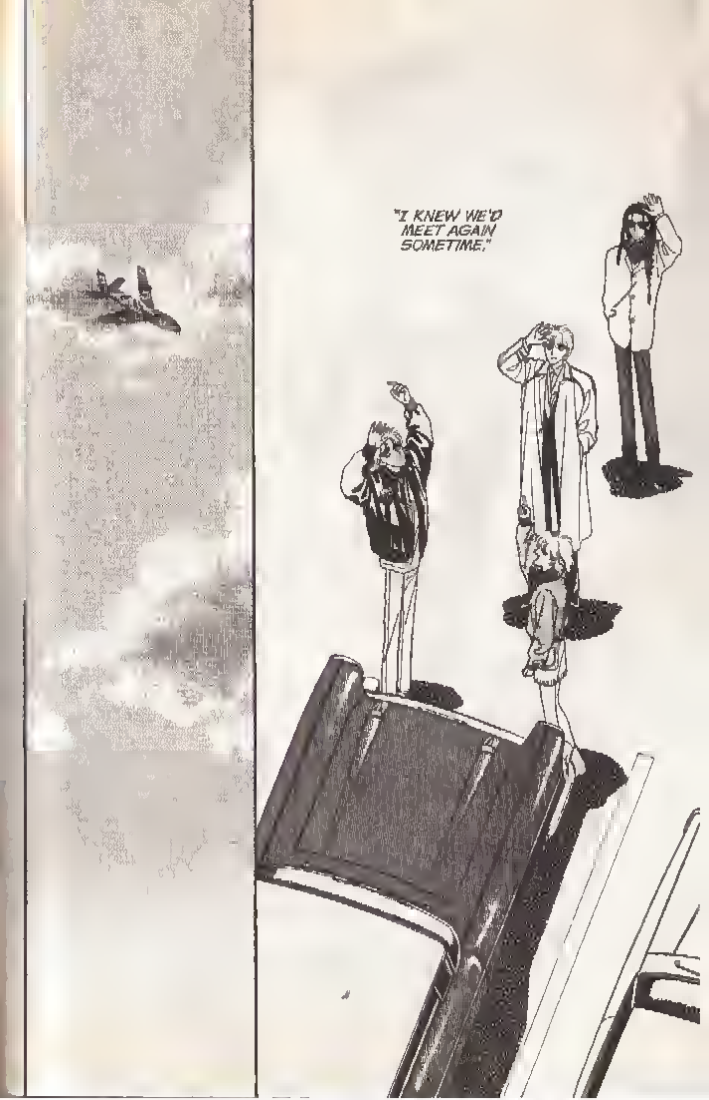

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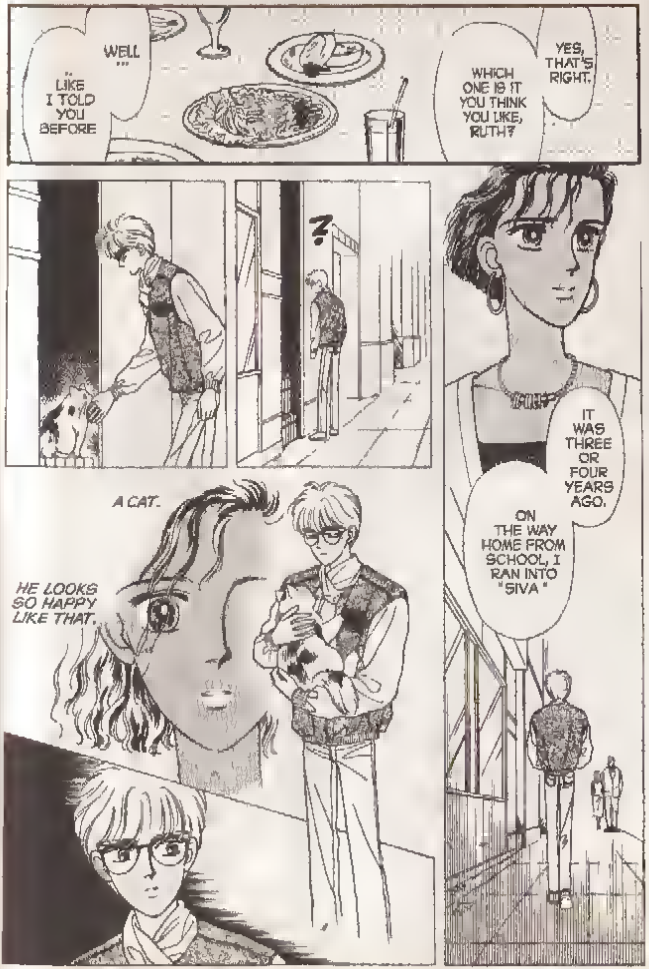
WELL ...
.. LIKE I TOLD YOU BEFORE
WHICH ONE IS IT YOU THINK YOU LIKE, RUTH?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
?
IT WAS THREE OR FOUR YEARS AGO.
ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL I RAN INTO "SIVA"
A CAT.
HE LOOKS SO HAPPY LIKE THAT.

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R-REALLY?
Yes.
IT'S TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T TELL ME ABOUT THAT SOONER.
THAT WAS SIVA.
ME, I...
YOU HAVE TO ASCERTAIN WHICH ONE YOU LIKE.
THAT JUST LEAVES YOU, MOLLY!
BUT... THAT'S GREAT!
SO IT'S NOT CIPHER? THANK GOD!
IF IT'S CIPHER, I'LL GIVE UP ON IT, BUT IF IT'S SIVA, I'VE GOT HOPE.
BUT THEN WE'D BE RIVALS.

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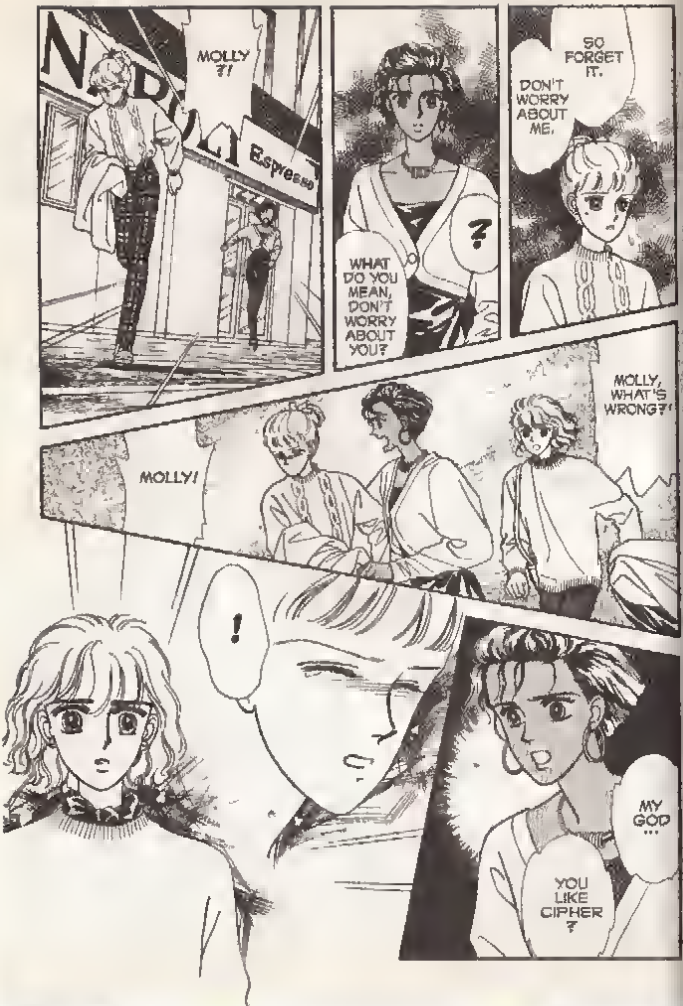

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MOLLY!
YOU'LL MEET SOMEONE WHO LOVES YOU.
AND ANOTHER AFTER THAT.
IT WILL HAP-PEN
THEY WILL
HOW COME ...
BOYS NEVER LOVE ME?
I HOPE THERE'S ONE WHO RESEMBLES CIPHER.
I'LL NEVER LOVE ANYONE BUT CIPHER.

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I'M GIVING UP TRYING TO MAKE HIM LIKE ME QUICKLY.
I...
SHE'S GREAT
I'M LUCKY.
FIRST I HAVE TO POLISH MYSELF.
I'LL HAVE TO WORK TO MAKE MYSELF THE KIND OF PERSON HE'D BE DRAWN TO.
SHE FIGURED IT OUT A WHILE AGO, THAT KID.
SHE KEPT SILENT TO COOPERATE WITH US.

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CLICK
WHERE'S SIVA?
HEY, ANISE!
HE WENT OUT WITH LEVINE.
DID YOU TELL SIVA THAT RUTH FIGURED IT OUT?
YEAH, I DID
ALL HE SAID WAS, "OH REALLY?"
I DON'T KNOW.
INSIDE, HE'S A REALLY INTERESTING GUY
DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER
HE LOOKED HAPPY GOING OUT.
DID LEVINE KNOW WE WERE SWITCHING IDENTITIES?

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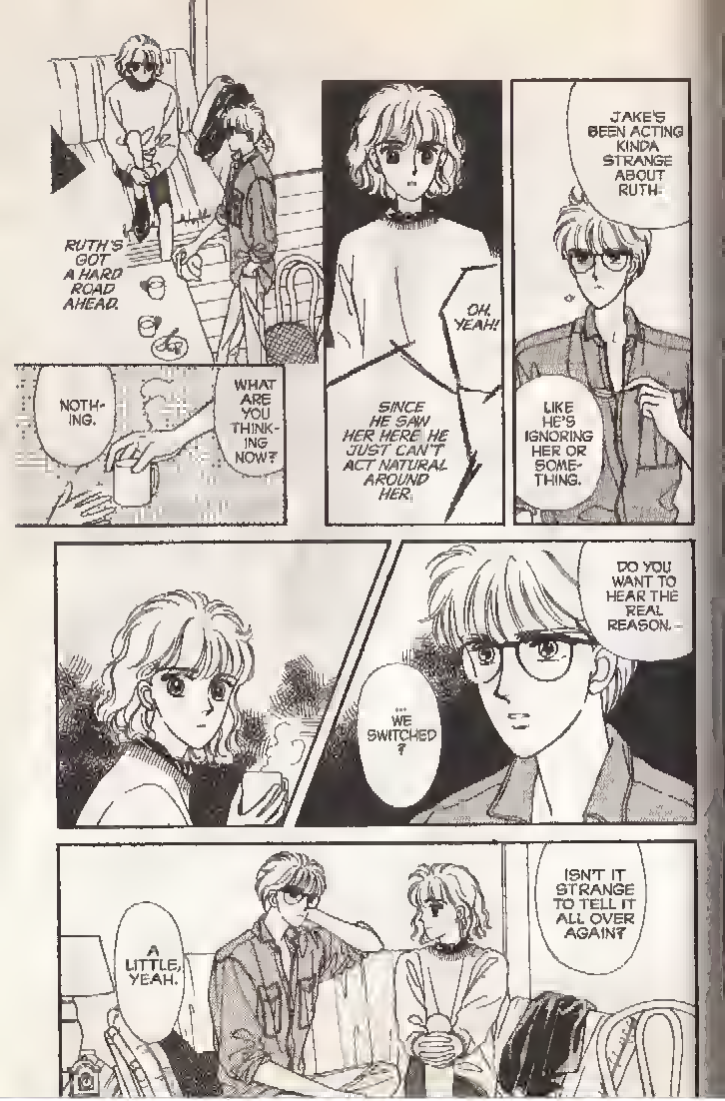
RUTH'S GOT A HARD ROAD AHEAD.
OH, YEAH!
SINCE HE SAW HER HERE, HE JUST CAN'T ACT NATURAL AROUND HER.
JAKE'S BEEN ACTING KINDA STRANGE ABOUT RUTH.
LIKE HE'S IGNORING HER OR SOMETHING.
NOTHING.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING NOW?
... WE SWITCHED?
DO YOU WANT TO HEAR THE REAL REASON.
A LITTLE, YEAH.
ISN'T IT STRANGE TO TELL IT ALL OVER AGAIN?

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HOW ABOUT YOU CALL ME "ROY"?
HM.., YEAH.
IF YOU WANT TO TELL ME, THEN TELL ME.
THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME
HM..
I WILL, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.
WHICH DO YOU PREFER?
HEE HEE
EITHER IS FINE WITH ME.

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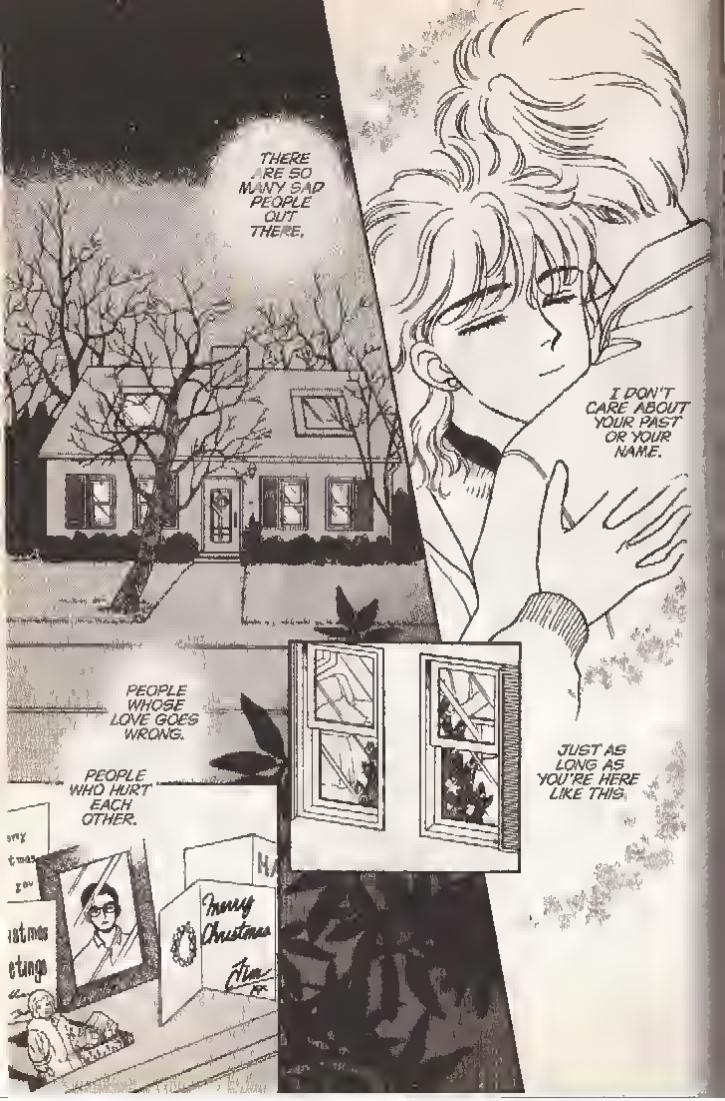
THERE ARE SO MANY SAD PEOPLE OUT THERE.
I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR PAST OR YOUR NAME.
PEOPLE WHOSE LOVE GOES WRONG.
PEOPLE WHO HURT EACH OTHER.
JUST AS LONG AS YOU'RE HERE LIKE THIS.
Merry Christmas
Kim

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THE BEDS ARE ALREADY MADE.
IS THIS ROOM ALL RIGHT? NOT TOO SMALL?
REAL-LY?
DON'T WORRY. WE'LL BE CAREFUL
THE CEILING LOOKS SO LOW NOW.
GOOD NIGHT, BOYS.
I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D HAVE ANOTHER CHRISTMAS LIKE THIS
LIFE IS FULL OF SURPRIS-ES.

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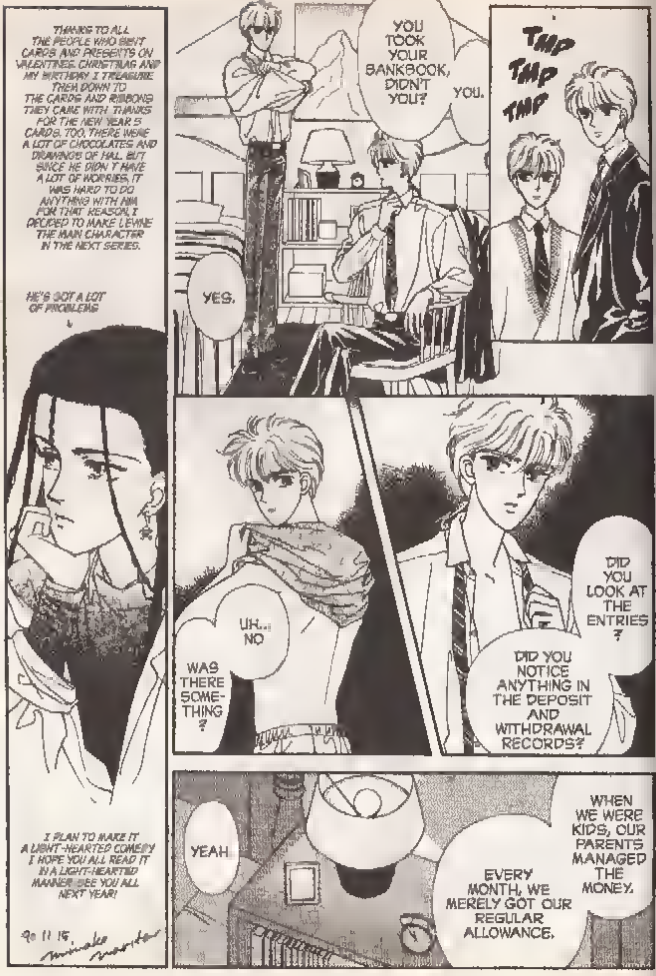
THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO SENT CARDS AND PRESENTS ON VALENTINES, CHRISTMAS AND MY BIRTHDAY. I TREASURE THEM DOWN TO THE CARDS AND RIBBONS THEY CAME WITH. THANKS FOR THE NEW YEAR'S CARDS, TOO. THERE WERE A LOT OF CHOCOLATES AND DRAWINGS OF HAL, BUT SINCE HE DIDN'T HAVE A LOT OF WORRIES, IT WAS HARD TO DO ANYTHING WITH HIM. FOR THAT REASON, I DECIDED TO MAKE LEVINE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN THE NEXT SERIES.
HE'S GOT A LOT OF PROBLEMS
I PLAN TO MAKE IT A LIGHT-HEARTED COMEDY. I HOPE YOU ALL READ IT IN A LIGHT-HEARTED MANNER. SEE YOU ALL NEXT YEAR!
90 11 15.
YOU TOOK YOUR BANKBOOK, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU.
YES.
TMP TMP TMP
WAS THERE SOME-THING?
UH... NO
DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING IN THE DEPOSIT AND WITHDRAWAL RECORDS?
DID YOU LOOK AT THE ENTRIES?
YEAH.
EVERY MONTH, WE MERELY GOT OUR REGULAR ALLOWANCE.
WHEN WE WERE KIDS, OUR PARENTS MANAGED THE MONEY.

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BUT ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR, A RELATIVELY LARGE CHUNK WAS WITHDRAWN
WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT WAS?
YEAH ...
MAYBE IT WAS DAD.
HE WAS BORROWING FROM US FOR HIS MOUNTAIN CLIMBING
APART FROM THAT, ALMOST ALL OF IT WAS LEFT IN THE BANK UNTOUCHED.
THAT'S RARE IN THIS WORLD FULL OF PARENTS WHO MAKE THEIR CHILDREN WORK AND TAKE THE MONEY.
YEAH ...I THINK SO TOO.
IT LOOKS LIKE HE TRIED TO PAY IT BACK LITTLE BY LITTLE, BUT...
THAT'S IT!
THAT'S WHY JEAN WAS SO AGAINST HIM CLIMBING!

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SHE PROBABLY COULDN'T FORGIVE HIM...
BUT JEAN WAS THE ONE WHO SAW HOW HARD WE WORKED...
NEITHER ONE OF THEM WAS COMPLETELY AT FAULT.
BOTH HAD THEIR REASONS.
YEAH, FOR NOW.
SO...
.. YOU'RE PLANNING TO WORK OUT OF NEW YORK FOR A WHILE
OH?
THEN WHAT DO WE DO WITH IT?
IT'S STUPID JUST TO LEAVE THE MONEY IN SAVINGS
THE TWO OF US TOGETHER HAVE A GOOD CHUNK OF CASH.

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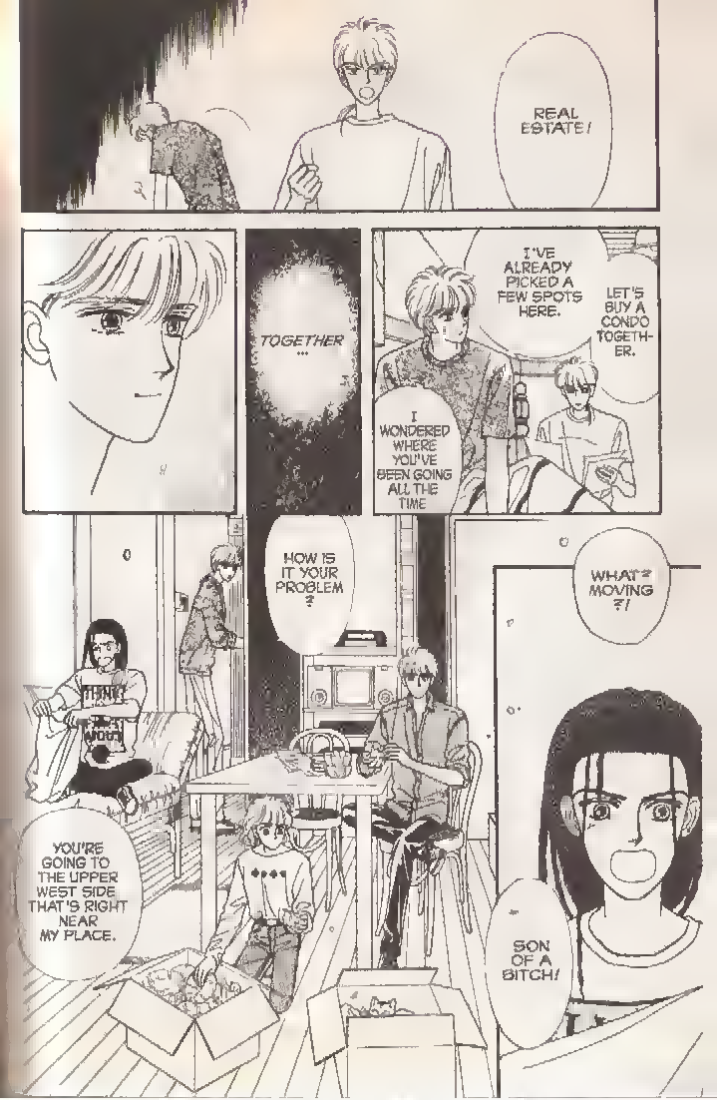
REAL ESTATE!
TOGETHER ...
I'VE ALREADY PICKED A FEW SPOTS HERE.
LET'S BUY A CONDO TOGETHER.
I WONDERED WHERE YOU'VE BEEN GOING ALL THE TIME
HOW IS IT YOUR PROBLEM?
WHAT? MOVING?!
YOU'RE GOING TO THE UPPER WEST SIDE THAT'S RIGHT NEAR MY PLACE.
SON OF A BITCH!

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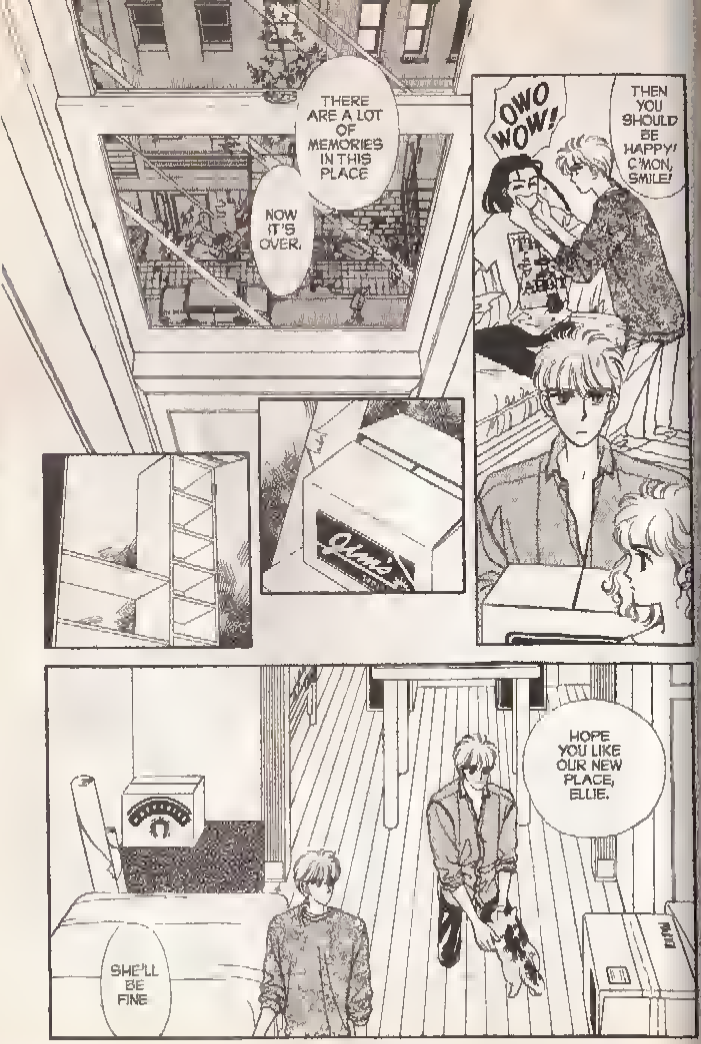
THERE ARE A LOT OF MEMORIES IN THIS PLACE
NOW IT'S OVER.
OWO WOW!
THEN YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY! C'MON, SMILE!
HOPE YOU LIKE OUR NEW PLACE, ELLIE.
SHE'LL BE FINE

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SHE KEEPS THINKING ABOUT WHAT SHE SHOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENT.
JEAN'S BEEN SAYING THAT A LOT RECENTLY.
IF SOMEONE DIES...
THEIR MEMORIES STOP THERE FOR ETERNITY
BUT IF YOU SURVIVE...
IT'S A CHANCE TO REWRITE THOSE MEMORIES.
YEAH.

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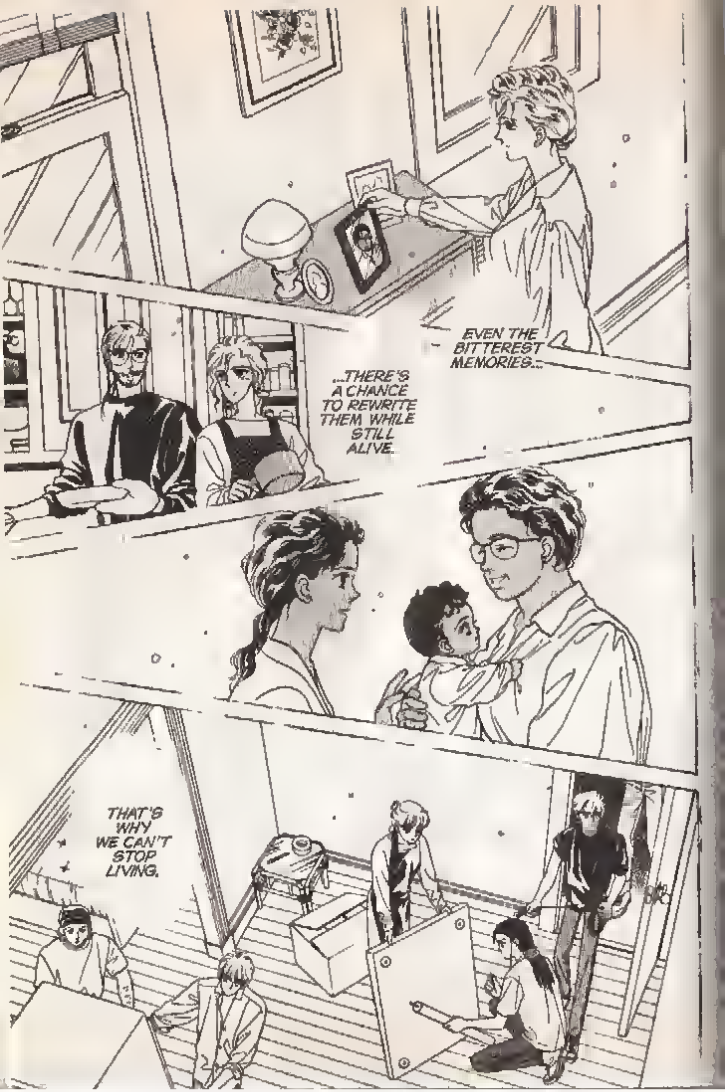

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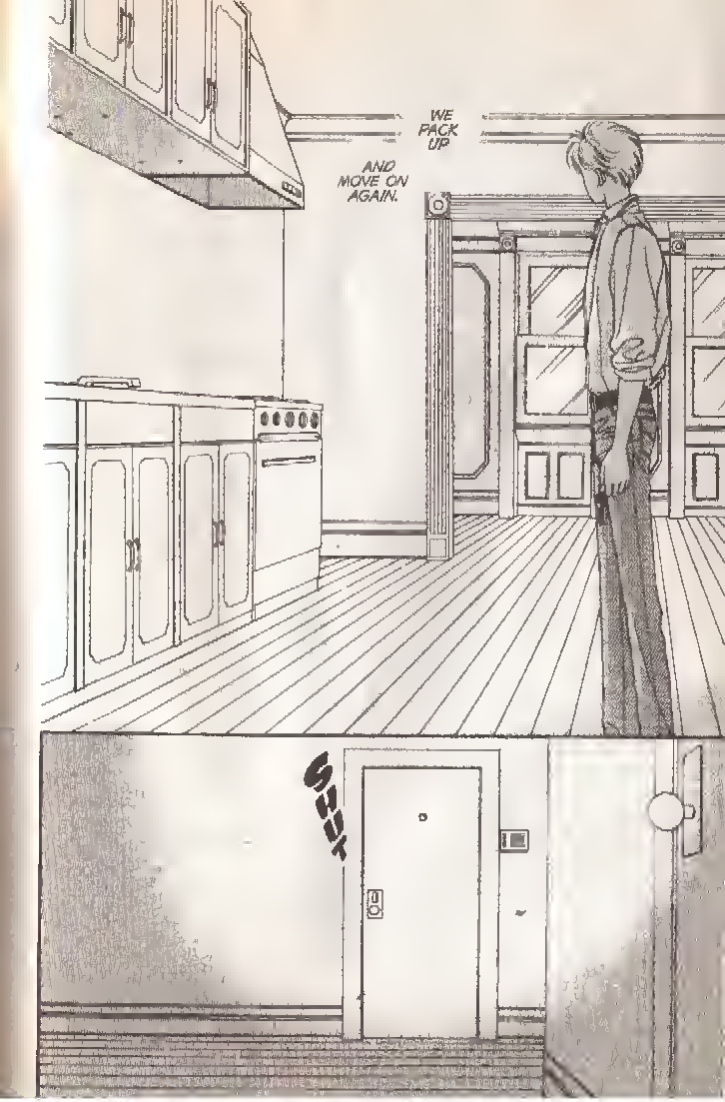

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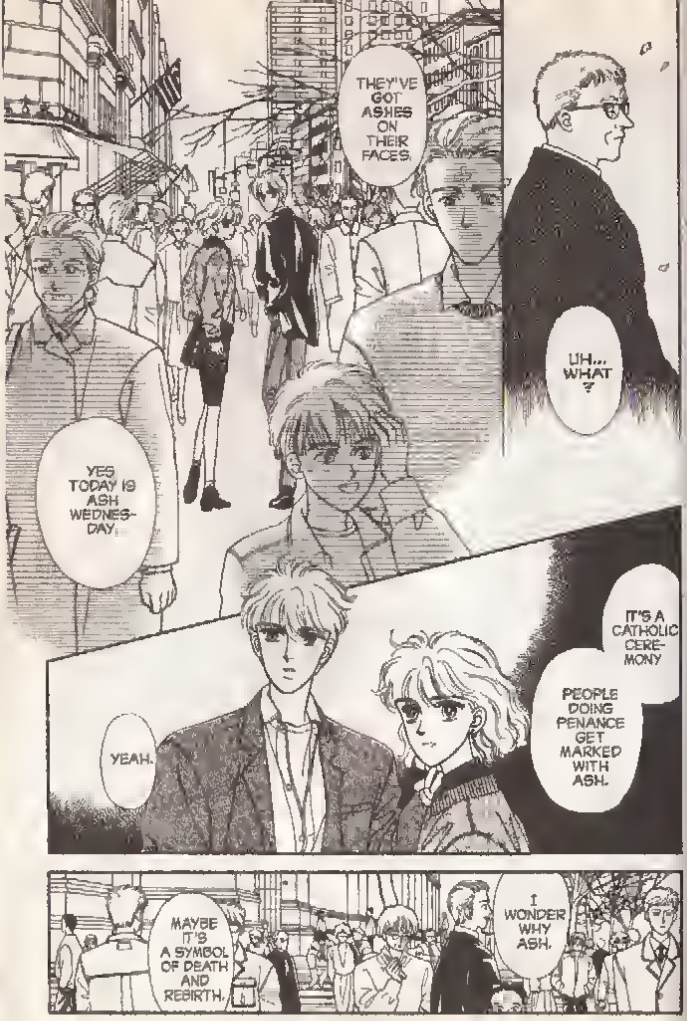
THEY'VE GOT ASHES ON THEIR FACES.
UH... WHAT?
YES. TODAY IS ASH WEDNES-DAY.
IT'S A CATHOLIC CERE-MONY
PEOPLE DOING PENANCE GET MARKED WITH ASH.
YEAH.
MAYBE IT'S A SYMBOL OF DEATH AND REBIRTH.
I WONDER WHY ASH.

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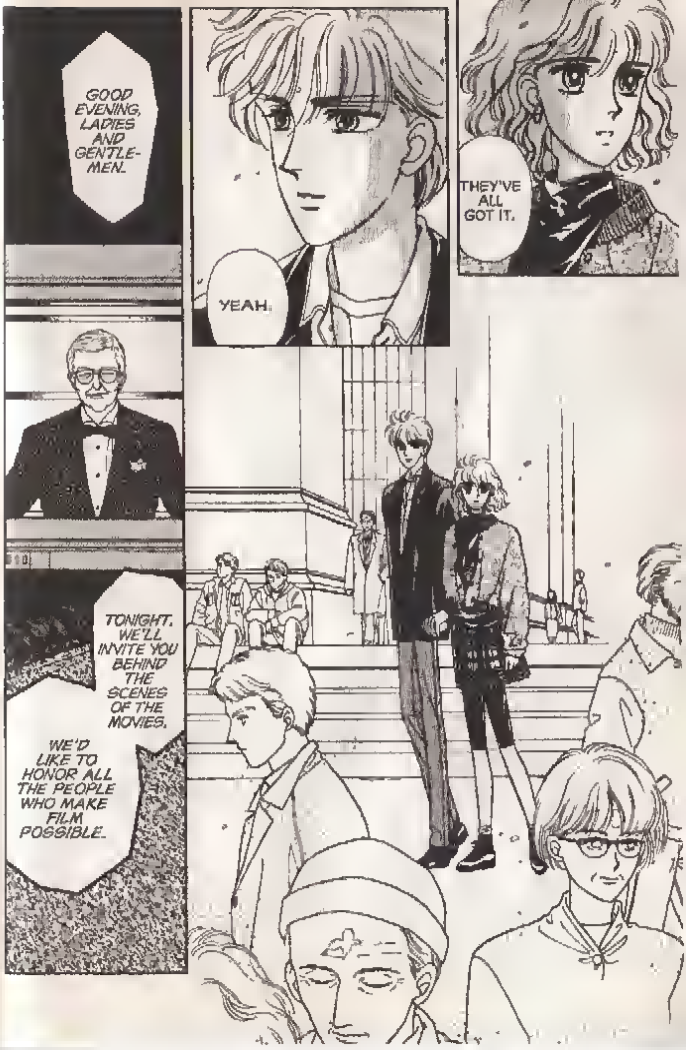
GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLE-MEN.
TONIGHT, WE'LL INVITE YOU BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE MOVIES.
WE'D LIKE TO HONOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE FILM POSSIBLE.
YEAH.
THEY'VE ALL GOT IT.

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TOO BAD YOU WEREN'T NOMINATED
IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO GET CHOSEN.
RIGHT NOW MY MAIN JOB IS TELE-VISION.
WELL, AT LEAST I'M PUTTING MY HEART IN IT.
BEFORE, I WORKED BECAUSE I THOUGHT I HAD NO OTHER OPTIONS.
EH? THAT'S QUITE AN ATTI-TUDE
YOU MEAN IF YOU CONCENTRATED ON ONE FILM, YOU MIGHT GET NOMINATED?
BUT NOW IT'S INTEREST-ING.
I'M ENJOYING IT.

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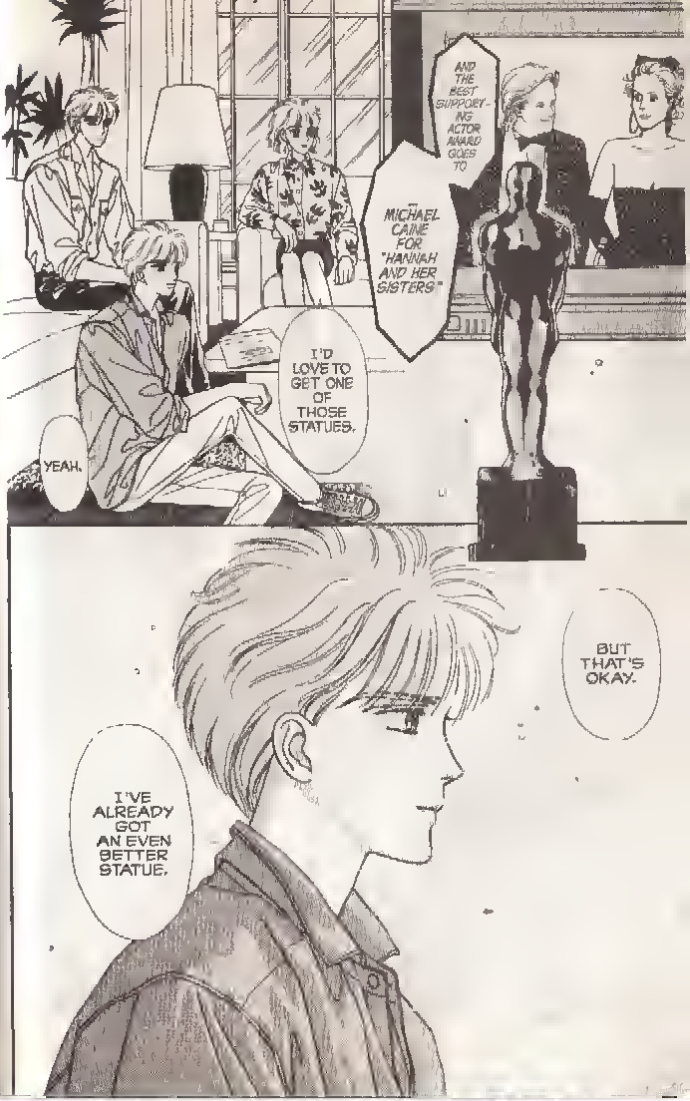
AND THE BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR AWARD GOES TO
MICHAEL CAINE FOR "HANNAH AND HER SISTERS."
I'D LOVE TO GET ONE OF THOSE STATUES.
YEAH.
BUT THAT'S OKAY.
I'VE ALREADY GOT AN EVEN BETTER STATUE.

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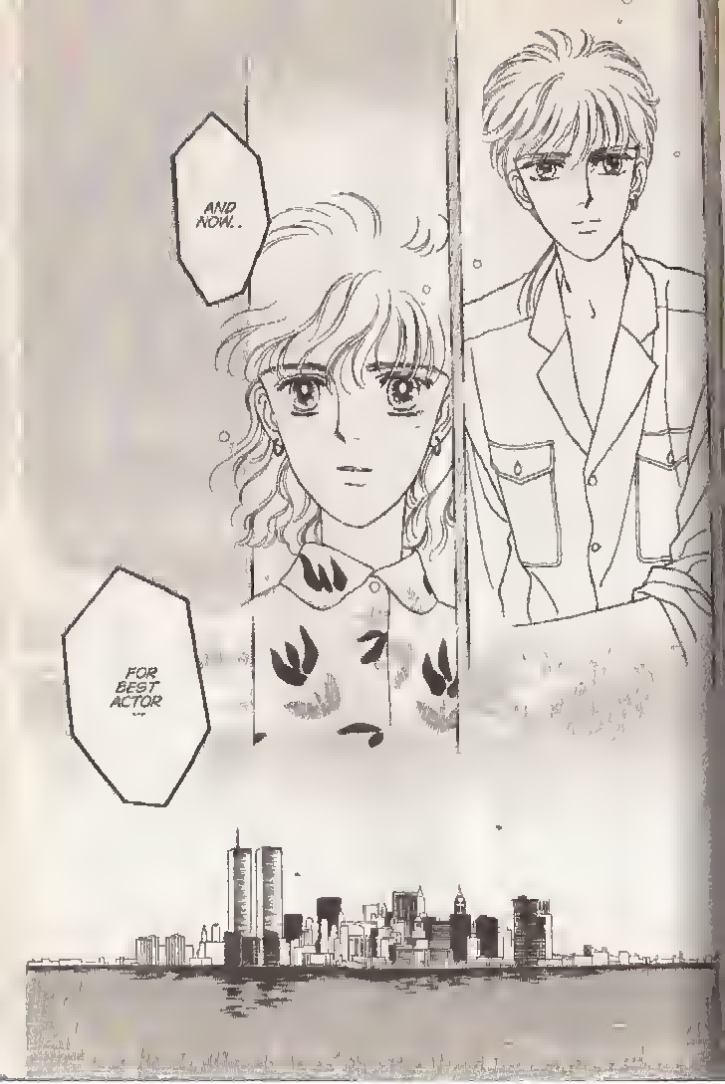

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CIPHER C.N.N. NEWS NETWORK

CIPHER
CIPHER SPECIAL BONUS SECTION
PERSONAL COOKING

Wow! Aren't you a little grown up?
Yikes, but I looked like a bird's nest.
Must be hard to say.
JAKE RANG IS YEARS OLD. HE WANTS TO TOY WITH HIS FRIEND ALEXANDRA LEVINE WHO IS SO CUTE HE CAN'T STAND IT.
Glad we'll be interviewed today.
Ha ha ha. What a liar's smile.
SO SAYS ALEXANDRA LEVINE, 10 YEARS OLD, WHO IS SECRETLY PLEASED
Glad during Xmas.
TODAY ON "PERSONAL COOKING," WE ONCE AGAIN VISIT THE NARITA HOME.
PERSONAL COOKING
GOOD MORNING. THIS IS THE CIPHER NEWS NETWORK MORNING EDITION.

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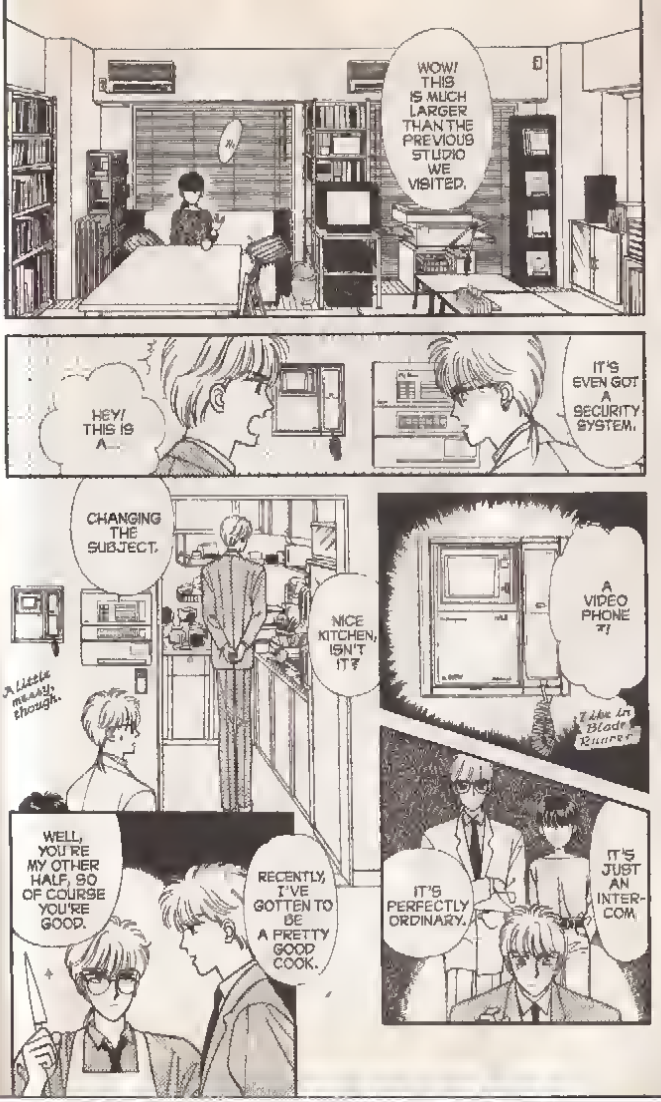
WOW! THIS IS MUCH LARGER THAN THE PREVIOUS STUDIO WE VISITED.
HEY! THIS IS A...
IT'S EVEN GOT A SECURITY SYSTEM.
CHANGING THE SUBJECT.
NICE KITCHEN, ISN'T IT?
A LITTLE MESSY, THOUGH.
A VIDEO PHONE?!
I like in Blade Runner
IT'S JUST AN INTER-COM.
IT'S PERFECTLY ORDINARY.
RECENTLY, I'VE GOTTEN TO BE A PRETTY GOOD COOK.
WELL, YOU'RE MY OTHER HALF, SO OF COURSE YOU'RE GOOD.

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If you're gonna fry..
CIPHER
..make it a drumstick!
JUST LEARNING. STILL A LITTLE CLUMSY, BUT IT TASTES GOOD.
WANTS TO TRY COOKING VEGETABLES, TOO.
SIVA
I cook with another— aca..
A PRO LEVEL COOK.
INSISTS ON THE FINEST FLAVORS
HAL
YOU DON'T HAVE TO CHOP IT SO FINELY.
UNCHARACTERISTICALLY SENSITIVE.
IN THE END, IT'S CRUDE AND MOSTLY BURNT
Whew! I'm tired!
SO HE GETS BORED HALFWAY THROUGH.
THE HEAT'S UP TOO HIGH!
LEVINE
DYNAMIC WITHOUT SAYING A WORD.
DADA
DADADA
That's what I like about you
Okay, okay.
DON'T USE CORN OIL! THIS NEEDS OLIVE OIL, YOU MORON!
BUT HE HAS HARD AND FAST RULES

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ENDS?
IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR?
SINCE I WORK AT HOME, COOKING IS MY HOBBY.
What-ever I cook tastes good to me
MY SERIES ENDS IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR JUST GOTTA GET IT OUT.
AFTER-WARDS, YOU GO BACK TO WORK? DON'T YOU GET TIRED?
DELICIOUS.
SUMMER VEGETABLE RAGOUT, MEDITERRANEAN STYLE
APPROVED BY SHA
I'M HALFWAY BETWEEN SHA AND LEVINE.
"Hey, will I meet Arisa? What happens to Hal? Will you forgive me?
Thinking only about how he wants to hang with Levine more.
AND IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH WE START SCENE #3
BECAUSE OF THE PAGE COUNT LAST MONTH I HAD TO CUT OFF THE STORY AT A STRANGE SPOT.
My hair has grown out and my ear-pierce is infected. I'm a mess
I'VE GOT TO KEEP PLOWING THOUGH TILL THE END REGARDLESS OF HOW I LOOK.
THIS IS C.N.N TOKYO.
HOW WILL THE STORY DEVELOP NEXT MONTH?
BEFORE THE FINAL DASH, SHE'S TAKING A BREAK AND GOING TO LONDON AND NEW YORK
OH OH
Is Kaoru Tachibana Dead?
Wait, This Issue

Personal Cooking – End

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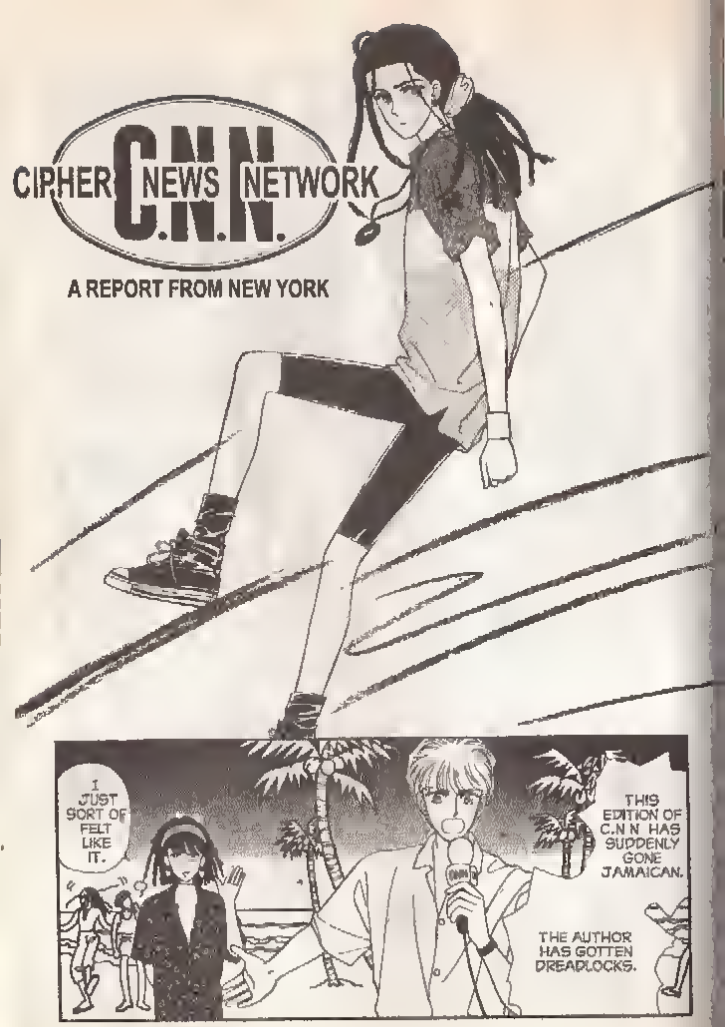
CIPHER C.N.N. NEWS NETWORK
A REPORT FROM NEW YORK
I JUST SORT OF FELT LIKE IT.
THIS EDITION OF C.N.N HAS SUDDENLY GONE JAMAICAN.
THE AUTHOR HAS GOTTEN DREADLOCKS.

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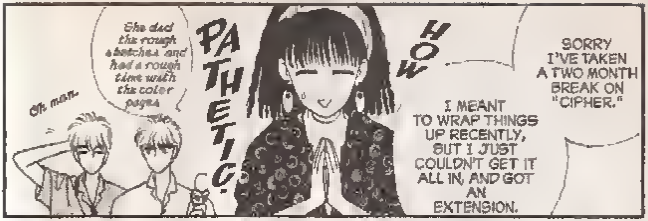
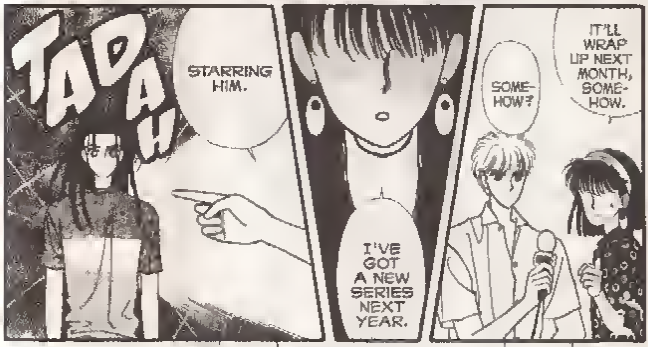
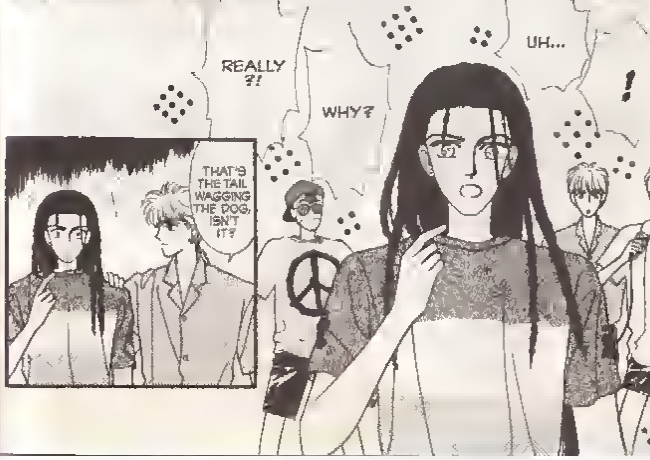
Sorry, Mitsuru-san. This is why. Are you watching?


Oh, man.
She died the rough sketches and had a rough time with the color pages.
PATHETIC.
HOW...
I MEANT TO WRAP THINGS UP RECENTLY, BUT I JUST COULDN'T GET IT ALL IN, AND GOT AN EXTENSION.
SORRY I'VE TAKEN A TWO MONTH BREAK ON "CIPHER."





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BECAUSE HE'S STILL UNDEVELOPED.
SOLA
...
WHY NOT USE ME?
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!
DUMP
LEVINE'S THE BEST ONE.
Heh heh. We can still hang out.
Maybe we get divided
Not necessarily
I bet you get a girl friend
It's too late to make new characters.
THE CHARACTERS ARE THE SAME, SO IT'S ALMOST A SEQUEL.
BUT THE CONTENTS ARE A CAMPUS STORY.
PLEASE KEEP READING.
I GOT THE IDEA WHEN I WAS RESEARCHING AMERICAN COLLEGE LIFE
C.N.N JAMAICAN IN NEW YORK!
ANYWAY, WE'LL SEE YOU NEXT MONTH.
UNTIL THE NEXT SERIES, SHE PLANS TO WANDER EUROPE.
CNN
Okay
Yeah, right.

A Report from New York – End

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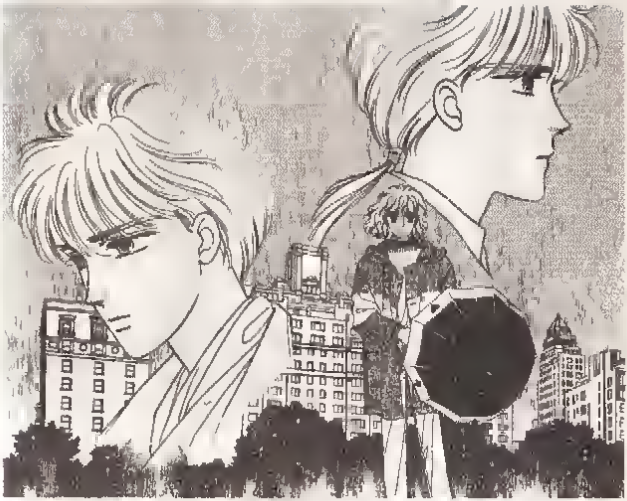

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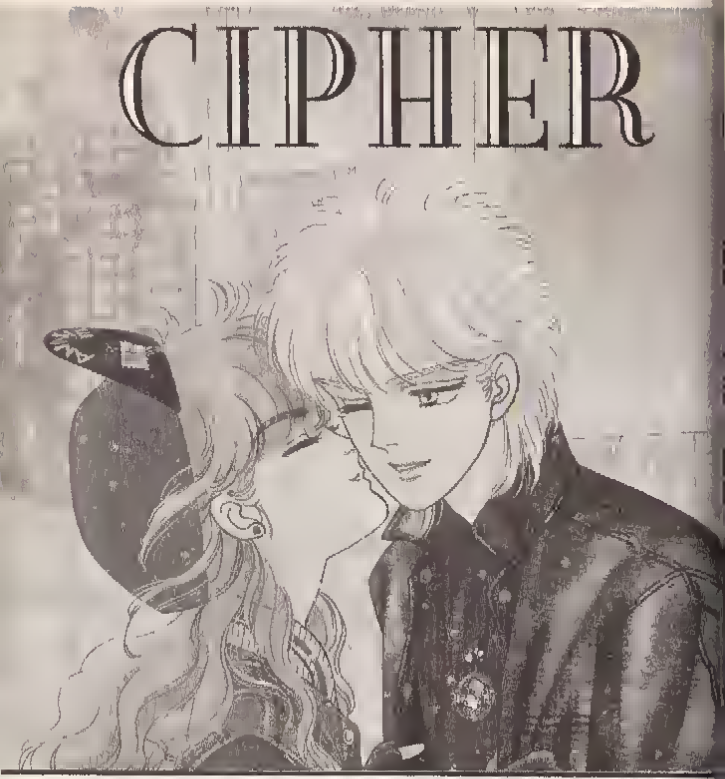

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